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THE
BELLA COOLA INDIANS

BY

T. F. McILWRAITH

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[P. iv]

PREFACE

THE term Bella Coola can be applied to the Indians who 101
formerly occupied more than twenty villages on the lower
Bella Coola River in central British Columbia, to their near
kinsfolk on the Kimsquit River, and to those living at the head
of South Bentinck Arm. Disease and changed conditions consequent upon the coming of the white man have so reduced [177]
their numbers that the last two groups of settlements have
been virtually abandoned, while only one village remains in
the Bella Coola valley. This is located on a reserve near the [161]
mouth of the river, and its four hundred inhabitants comprise
practically all the survivors of what was once a tribe of several
thousand people, with a distinctive language and culture of
their own.

The material contained in this monograph was collected in 114
this one village many years ago for the National Museum of
Canada.[1] I was in the field during two periods that extended
from March to August, 1922, and from September, 1923, to
February, 1924. My field notes were worked up and the com- 128
pleted manuscript submitted to the Museum in 1926. Since
that time it has suffered various vicissitudes. Recommended
for publication by the Chief of the Anthropological Division,
it passed through the hands of various editors; questions were
raised about its size and the suitability of detailed studies of
social anthropology in a government publication, and by the
time these matters were adjusted, funds for extensive publications were unavailable and the manuscript was put aside.
Since the aim of the investigation was to record, as far as pos- [121]
sible, the sum-total of the complex and interwoven social life
of the Bella Coola, I did not think it desirable to prepare short
articles[2] summarizing different aspects, preferring to await an

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[1] Then the Victoria Memorial Museum.

[2] The only exception was a short article on Bella Coola supernatural animals published in the Ontario Annual Archaeological Report for 1924-25, pp. 17-27.

128 opportunity for the publication of the manuscript as a whole. [121] I am deeply grateful to the Canadian Social Science Research Council for making this possible, and to their anonymous readers, many of whose suggestions I have utilized in the final draft, and to the University of Toronto Press for their subsidization.

Though the lapse of time between the field investigation and the appearance in print of the results is unfortunate, it is a matter of less importance than would be the case in other branches of science. To the student of social institutions, the significant fact is that a certain group of *homo sapiens* has practised certain customs, whether in 1922 or 1948 is immaterial. [121] Furthermore, the aim of the investigation was to collect information on Bella Coola life as it was *before* the breakdown of their own culture, and for this, data collected between 1922 and 1924 are more valuable than those acquired today. The manuscript was prepared from my extensive field notes, when the material was still fresh in my mind, and, with the exception of this preface and a few minor changes in editing,[1] is presented as it was written in 1924-26.

121 When studying the Bella Coola, I was definitely under the influence of the English school of anthropologists. To Haddon, Rivers, and Seligman, to name the outstanding English field anthropologists of their generation, the study of a native tribe meant an expedition to some far-off corner of the world, to a people about whom little was known. A return visit was improbable; aboriginal customs were passing away, hence it was the duty of the field investigator to learn and to record every scrap of information. I remember Dr. Haddon's insistence that it might be some trivial detail which would throw light on culture distribution, and hence, perhaps, aid in the reconstruction of tribal or racial movements, or in theoretical studies of the development or degeneration of institutions. Characteristic of this school, too, was an intense human interest in field

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[1] Especially in changing the number of years which has elapsed since various incidents took place.

121 work. To overcome the difficulties of language, of suspicion, and of native reticence was a task in itself. And only when this was accomplished and the investigator recognized as a friend, could the information be obtained upon which the investigator was to describe "his people." As a broad generalization, the attitude of American anthropologists to field work in America is very different. Indians live near at hand; well-educated interpreters and informants are usually available; there is no thought of gleaning information from suspicious natives at the ends of the earth; and, perhaps most important of all, so much of Indian life has disappeared that the American anthropologist must learn by interview and question, rather than by observation and participation. The American school has tended to return repeatedly, often for short periods, to a small group or even to a single informant, and to publish intensive studies of aspects of culture with which the investigator is concerned.

121 128 Both approaches have their advantages. Anthropologically, using that term in its broadest sense, American Indians are better known than the natives of other continents; the professional anthropologist knows where to find detailed studies in technical journals and government publications, and to combine them if he wishes to know the life of a people as a whole. But to the anthropologist who is not a specialist in America, as well as to scholars in other social sciences, this lack of synthesis is a definite deterrent, and it may well be asked whether the anthropologist has played his part in making known the results of his branch to workers in cognate fields. It was this which led R. H. Lowie to publish his *Crow Indians*,[4] and though the author reiterates that the volume contains little that he had not made known in earlier writings[5] in anthropological journals, it is safe to say that the *Crow Indians* will be read, quoted, and used when other reports on which it is based have been forgotten.

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[4] New York: 1935.

[5] *Id.*, p. xi.

121 If I were to investigate and report on the Bella Coola at 128 the present time, I would undoubtedly be influenced by many years of contact with American anthropologists and their work. I would assume a greater knowledge of North-West coast institutions, less interest in the details of ceremonial rites, and it would be impossible not to avoid comparisons with, and observations upon, the theoretical implications of many of the facts recorded. But though every field investigator is strictly objective as to the facts he collects, yet his interests, and his method of presenting them, are coloured by his background; in my case, by the older school of English anthropology. On the whole, I think this is fortunate. It means that the Bella Coola are portrayed as I saw them when I came fresh to a new field, practically uninfluenced by problems of North-West coast culture, and fully prepared to throw myself into their life. They were "my people," not a group in which I was interested because they had, or had not, certain culture traits with which I was concerned. In the course of my teaching experience, furthermore, I have wished repeatedly to give serious students detailed field monographs in which are recorded the interwoven social, religious, and folk-lore concepts of a people, the sum-total of their mental life, collected by one man at one time. This I have tried to do for the Bella Coola.

123 Following the English tradition, I wish to record how this material was collected. Before leaving for British Columbia, [115] I was advised by the late H. I. Smith, who had worked in the area, to talk to Joshua Moody (see Plate 2), an elderly Bella Coola Indian with whom Smith had worked. On explaining to Joshua that I had come to record in permanent form the traditions and lore of *his* people, Joshua grinned broadly and promised his help. Unfortunately, he spoke only a few words of English. I tried interpreter after interpreter, Indian and white, with only fair success, and my difficulties increased with the [464] opening of the canning season and the consequent employment of the younger men and women. I was urged to learn the [122] Chinook jargon, which serves widely as a *lingua franca* on the [198]

123

coast, and began the study with much misgiving. The results [122] [198] were surprisingly satisfactory.

After a few weeks I found that I had sufficient knowledge of Chinook to dispense with interpreters and deal directly with the older people, a tremendous advantage. Pride of ancestry [181] is one of the strongest characteristics of the Bella Coola, and once convinced of my sincere interest in and respect for their history, they were willing to talk. They resent the condescension with which most white men regard them, so that contact with one who was friendly and sympathetic came as a pleasant surprise. There were, of course, difficulties. The canning season [464] had begun and every able-bodied man was working away from the village. The conviction of each person that he was the best 124 source of information, and that conferences with another were useless or unreliable, caused distrust. The desire of each informant to discuss only what interested him; the complexity of Bella Coola life itself; the necessity of checking every statement, and the extreme difficulty of doing so on account of discrepancies in the myths of different families; the fear, almost groundless, of each individual that someone else had infringed on his rights by recounting some legend; and, not least, the need for tact, patience, and a sense of humour under all conditions, were some of the obstacles to be surmounted. Nor was Chinook entirely satisfactory. It has enough words for matters pertaining to fishing, hunting, and trading, but for the realms of sociology or theology it is inadequate. This difficulty could not have been overcome without the patient help of my informants. Animated by the desire to help, they used every expedient in the way of parallel and synonym to explain obscure terms. Sometimes a younger man was called in for some abstruse meaning; more often it gradually became clear from different applications. Once the significance of a word was definitely understood, I made a note of it and used it henceforth. A useful vocabulary was thus built up, and conversations were carried on in mixed Bella Coola and Chinook, eked out by whatever English words were known by the person with

124 whom I was working. Before I left, this medley contained so much Bella Coola that it was unintelligible to white people who knew Chinook alone.

Activities in the canneries would have interfered seriously with my work during the summer of 1922 if two men had not [115] been confined to the village, Captain Schooner owing to an injured wrist, and Jim Pollard by the illness of his wife. These two men were willing to work half a day apiece without jealousy. Each was intensely proud of the traditions of his people and, realizing that their culture was passing away, was glad to assist in making it permanent in writing. An intimacy sprang 123 up between Captain Schooner (see Plate 3) and myself culmin- [597] ating in my adoption, a circumstance which established and improved my position in the community. In this way I was enabled to collect a large amount of material before July when it was necessary for me to leave for the east.

In September, 1923, when I returned to Bella Coola, I found that Captain Schooner had died a few months before, respected alike by white men and Indians. With the aid of others with whom I had made contact it was possible to obtain much new information, as well as to clear up many obscure points. The previous summer I had been so overwhelmed with material that I had no time to collate it in the field and the gaps only became apparent after a year's study. The men were so busy hunting and laying in stocks of fire-wood, however, that I found it difficult to arrange regular hours of work, but this was a trifle compared with the initial difficulties of my first trip. In October, when the Bella Coola began to prepare for 123 the winter dances, they had to appoint a successor to Captain 796 Schooner, who had played a leading part in their production. 887 Having been adopted by him, it was suggested that I take his place, a proposition which I readily accepted. This admitted me to the ranks of the old men, and I imagine that my interest encouraged them to hold more ceremonials than they had done for several years. In former times, a number of the older men used to devote much time and thought to the composing, re-

membering, and rendering of songs; in 1923 it was found that 123
Jim Pollard (see Plate 4) alone had a sufficiently accurate
memory to act as announcer. As more and more men wished 796
to perform, he found himself unable to keep the texts in order, 887
and asked me to join the choir as prompter. I held this position for the rest of the winter, taking a full part in every ceremony. Although the old customs had broken down enormously, this actual participation enabled me to understand the winter dances in a manner impossible from mere description. Later on, phonographic records were made of many of the songs used, [126]
thus preserving specimens of the fast disappearing music.

My intimate association with the Bella Coola enabled me 128
to collect the material here presented which, having been verified and reverified, I have every reason to believe is correct. 104
Nevertheless, it has one serious defect owing to the lack of acuteness of my ear. I found it almost impossible to differentiate certain sounds; in fact, I sometimes recorded the same word with different spellings. Consequently, I cannot guarantee the accuracy of the native terms used in this monograph. Moreover, I was entirely unable to analyze proper names, which would have been of great value in understanding the attributes of supernatural beings.

When writing up field notes, the realization of my own inefficiency in the recording of sounds tempted me to rely upon the spelling of Boas whenever possible. After considerable hesitation, I rejected this course for the following reason. Ethnological work falls into two categories, descriptive and comparative. This monograph is of the former type, based on actual work in the field and the inclusion of any material from another source would destroy its originality. I believe that a descriptive work should consist exclusively of the author's own research, and I have adhered to this principle in spite of the advantages which would have followed the use of Boas' linguistic terms. For the same reason no attempt has been made to 128
compare the customs and beliefs of the Bella Coola with those of other tribes, although this would undoubtedly have shed

28 light on obscure points. That is a task for the comparative
student and nothing but confusion would result from such an
incorporation in this volume. For the benefit of the reader,
[114] footnotes have been inserted referring to *The Mythology of the
Bella Coola Indians[*] by Boas, the most comprehensive descrip-
tion of the tribe. In the field I deliberately disregarded pub-
lished accounts.

182 And what of these people, the subject of this book?

The intimate experiences of the second winter in Bella
Coola only confirmed my feeling of sadness at the decay of the
old arts and crafts. Music, painting, carving, weaving, story-
telling, acting, all are passing away. Only a handful of the
tribe survives, and of them the younger people ape the white
man and have little interest in the lore and customs of their
fathers. I know of few sadder experiences than talking with
some Bella Coola patriarch and realizing the tragedy which he
feels at the termination of his people's culture.

Though the individual may suffer, civilization must press onward and the life of the Indian will soon disappear. With it will pass forever manners, customs, beliefs, rites, and knowledge, data of value to students of man both now and in the future. Every year lessens the amount of information available. In Bella Coola, for example, the death of Captain Schooner left a gap which none could fill. Others must follow him, and within a short time there will be no ethnological work possible in that tribe. A tithe of the people may survive, but their culture, the growth of generations, will have been swept away.

000 Most of those to whom I am indebted for help in this study
have passed away. Dr. A. C. Haddon and Dr. W. H. R. Rivers,
both of Cambridge University, who were my mentors in anth-
ropology, are dead; so too is Dr. E. Sapir, former Chief of the
Anthropological Division in the National Museum, who gave
[127] me instruction in phonetics, and Mr. H. I. Smith, Dominion
Archaeologist, to whom are owing most of the photographs re-

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[*] Memoirs of the American Museum of Natural History, vol. II, 1898.

produced here. I can only place on record my deep obligation 000
and gratitude to each of these four. Dr. D. Jenness, who succeeded [127]
Dr. Sapir, was most co-operative. In Bella Coola, I was treated with uniform kindness by the white inhabitants, particularly Mrs. Clayton, Mr. and Mrs. Bert Robson, and Mr. and Mrs. Andy Christensen.

Finally, and most important of all, I wish to express my appreciation to the Bella Coola themselves. Without their generous, kindly and helpful co-operation, this book could never have been written. I came as an uninvited stranger; they treated me as a friend and a guest; and I left with
intense regret. My chief friends were Joshua Moody, Captain [115]
Schooner, and Jim Pollard, but I was also greatly assisted by Mr. Willie Mack, Mr. and Mrs. Tallio Charlie, and Mr. and Mrs. Lame Charlie. To a host of others I am indebted in only a slightly less extent. The aid and friendship of these men and women is one of my pleasantest memories, and one which I wish to record in all gratitude and appreciation.

In the actual publication of this complicated manuscript, 128
I have likewise been fortunate in receiving co-operation and help. The University of Toronto Press accepted it for publication during the war, facing—and overcoming—the inevitable shortage of materials and of skilled craftsmen. Great difficulty
was experienced in obtaining the type for phonetic symbols; to [104]
avoid undue duplication all native words, whether proper or
common names, have been printed in italics. It is a tribute to 000
the Press that it has completed the work. I am especially indebted to several former members of the editorial staff: Mrs. Hewitt, who supervised the initial editing, and her assistants, Mrs. Hackett and Mrs. Buzek. Mr. Weir, foreman of the composing room of the Press, has surmounted endless difficulties with enthusiasm and ingenuity. I am also grateful to Miss Harman, Associate Editor, who took the responsibility for final production details. Mr. Burns, General Manager of the Press, and Professor Brown, Editor, have both been helpful and co-operative throughout.

000 It is a pleasure to record my indebtedness to my wife for her help in the initial preparation of the manuscript. In the final revision, and in seeing the manuscript through the press, I received painstaking and efficient help from Miss Margaret Thomson, my museum assistant. Miss Catherine McEwen was kind enough to prepare the line drawing of a Bella Coola mask used on the title-page.

T. F. McI.

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[P. xvi is blank]

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23. Memorial post with model canoe and figures representing slaves
24. Painted sign showing the wealth distributed at a potlatch. The animal figures above represent mountain goats

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948

NE6 Bellacoola NE6

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PHONETIC KEY[1]

VOWELS

a, as in *father*
ä, as in *hat*
e, as in *fate*
i, as in *pique*
o, as in *note*
u, as in *rule*
ʌ, as in *but*
ε, as in *met*
ι, as in *hit*
ᴜ, as in *put*
ə, obscure vowel like *a* in *idea*
ᵃ, exponent vowels, voiced but slighted in enunciation. The same device is used for consonants slighted in enunciation.

CONSONANTS

p, *t*, *k*, *l*, *m*, *n*, *s*, *w*, *y*, *h*, *r*,[2] as in English
q, velar *k*
p', *t'*, *k'*, *q'*, aspirated surds
p̣, *ṭ*, *ḳ*, *q̣*, glottalized stops
k̥, anterior palatal *k*
ḳ̥, anterior palatal *ḳ*
b, *d*, intermediate between surd and sonant
ḍ, glottalized intermediate
dj, as in *jam*
c, as *sh* in *shell*
ł, spirantal *l*
tł, *t* + *ł*
ṭł, glottalized *tł*
x, as in Scottish, *loch*
x̣, velar *x*, as in German, *ach*
x̥, anterior palatal *x*, as in German, *ich*
ɹ, peculiar *r* sound, apparently velar.

·, for example, *a*·, or *t*·, indicates lengthening of preceding vowel or consonant

ʼ, indicates a glottal stop

ʻ, indicates aspiration

´, indicates accentuation of the syllable so marked.

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[1] Based on the simpler system described in *Phonetic Transcription of Indian Languages*, (Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections, vol. 66, No. 6, Washington (1916), pp. 3-7).

[2] The *r* sound was used only by one old man and several of his children and grandchildren.

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

THE BELLA COOLA INDIANS

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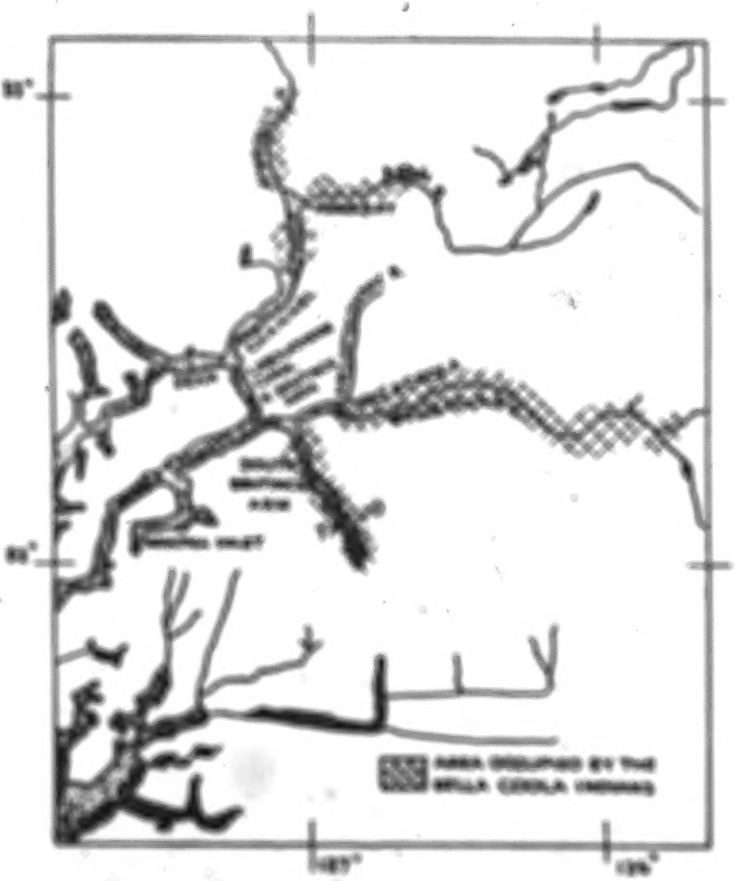
53°
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AREA OCCUPIED BY THE
BELLA COOLA INDIANS

Map of the Bella Coola area

[facing p. 1]

CHAPTER I

LOCATION AND ENVIRONMENT

Location—Bella Coola Villages—Tribal Organization—Neighbouring Tribes

LOCATION

"BELLA COOLA" is the common designation of those Indians who, until a few years ago, inhabited the valley of the Bella Coola River in central British Columbia. Boas has recorded[1] that the name is a mis-pronunciation of *Bilxula*,[2] a Kwakiutl word of doubtful origin which white pioneers assumed to be the appellation of the people in question.① There is no term in their own language to include the groups treated in this monograph. Linguistically, the Bella Coola form an isolated island of Salish-speaking people, separated from others of the same stock by tribes of Athapascan and Kwakiutl lineage.[3] Culturally, they belong to the central section of the North Pacific coast area.[4] 101 [197]

The Bella Coola River rises among the mountainous uplands of central British Columbia. Its two main branches fall rapidly, about forty-five miles from the sea, into two deep gorges which unite, some five miles farther on, to form the valley of the Bella Coola. Down this the river rushes in serpentine curves (see Plate 5). Too shallow and too rapid for the use of large boats, even if such had been known to the Bella Coola, it serves to bear their dug-out canoes, each hewn from some mighty cedar. The valley is never wider than two or three miles and is hemmed in by lofty snow-capped moun- 133 [501]

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[1] *The Mythology of the Bella Coola Indians* (Memoirs of the American Museum of Natural History, 1898), vol. II, part 2, p. 25. Repeated references will be made to this work, and when Boas is quoted without further description, the reference will be to this memoir. [113]

[2] Pronounced *Bilxula* by a Kimsquit man endeavouring to quote a Kwakiutl.

[3] Boas, p. 26.

[4] Clark Wissler, *The American Indian* (2nd ed., New York, 1922), p. 227. [113]

133 tains. From each pocket between these mountains an ice-
cold affluent comes swirling down to the main river. The
137 predominant tree in the river valleys is the cedar[4] which in
many cases attains great girth and height. Cottonwoods
flourish in places, and everywhere there is an almost impene-
trable undergrowth of devil's club, berry bushes, and other
shrubbery of almost tropical density. On the lower slopes of
the mountains, moss-festooned pines and spruces are the most
common trees, gradually becoming smaller and fewer until the
133 barren peaks are reached. The mountains rise so precipitously
that their snowcaps and glaciers seem to overhang the valley,
a narrow ribbon of green winding far below. The range of
vision from the bank of the river is limited by the all-encircling
mountains. Here and there a distant vista opens up to expose
peak after peak, but on the whole there is a feeling of confine-
ment, in contrast with the open wastes of the upper country
where the Bella Coola rises. Mountains, forests, flowing water,
these are the three dominant impressions of the country (see
Plate 6).

136 The mammals of central British Columbia, although com-
paratively common, have never been of primary importance.
[291] The marten, the wolverine, the lynx, and bears, both black
and grizzly, were formerly hunted for their skins to serve as
[262] cloaks. Deer were killed whenever possible, but formed a
negligible item of diet. The beaver also was prized for its
[439] flesh. The skins of moose and caribou were traded from the
Carrier Indians, but neither of these animals was found in the
[286] Bella Coola area. The mammal of greatest economic impor-
[237] tance was the mountain goat, the wool of which was woven into
blankets. Smoked goat meat was formerly found in every
[251] house and was almost the only flesh available during the
winter. Small game was abundant, but seals were a luxury.
[262] Neither were birds of great importance to the Bella Coola.
[223] Members of the tribe resident near the sea-coast used to kill

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[4] Appendix C contains a glossary of the scientific names of the flora and fauna mentioned in this monograph.

quantities of ducks and geese, and the inhabitants of the inland 223
villages sometimes made hunting expeditions to the nesting [136]
places of wild-fowl in the lakes of the interior uplands. Although numbers of birds were sometimes killed in this way, [262]
they were never a steady article of diet. The same is true of grouse. Always plentiful, these birds were commonly killed, but never in large numbers.

The basis of the food supply was fish. The river teemed 226
with salmon, which enabled the country to support its relatively large population. 262 Spring, sockeye, hump-back, dog, and cohoe salmon, all entered the river in thousands during the spring and summer, while the steel-head could be caught throughout the year. They were taken in weirs and their [251]
flesh smoked for winter use. Throughout the year, salmon was the principal article of diet. Second in importance was the olachen, a fish somewhat resembling a herring, which entered the river in great numbers during April or May. They [252]
were taken in purse-like nets,[1] allowed to rot for ten days or [263]
two weeks, and then boiled. The grease was skimmed off and [237]
kept indefinitely to be used as a relish for other foods. It was [785]
always a sign of poverty if a person were obliged to eat berries without olachen grease. Trout and bull-heads were found in [556]
the river, but were not sufficiently plentiful to be of importance.

Although no form of agriculture was practised, the Bella 262
Coola used vegetable food to a considerable extent. Berries [241]
were abundant; some were eaten raw, but many more were [251]
pounded into a pulpy mass and dried in the sun. Cakes prepared in this way kept indefinitely and formed one of the regular winter foods. The bark of the hemlock and cottonwood was eaten, as well as the roots of many plants. In recent years many of these have not been used, so that [178]
an investigator is apt to overlook their great importance in early times. Although useless for food, the cedar was the 824
corner-stone of Bella Coola material culture. From its trunk 322
were split out, with wedges, the wide planks which formed

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[1] See Appendix A for a description of olachen fishing.

524 [322] [285] [531] 132 their houses. Dishes, benches, cooking-boxes, cradles, totem-poles, canoes, all were carved from this wood. The bark was woven into baskets, and when dyed formed the most common ceremonial decoration.

Even within the forty miles of the river valley formerly occupied by the Bella Coola there are considerable variations in climate. At the mouth of the river the typical Pacific coast type is found, without great extremes of temperature and with much rain, especially in winter time. During winter, the moisture is precipitated as snow a few hundred feet above the valley, and the limit of the snow can be watched on the mountain slopes, rising or falling a few feet from day to day. Farther up the valley, the winters are colder and in many cases snow lies for weeks on the ground, and in the upper part of the Bella Coola area the winters are severe, although much more moderate than on the upper regions immediately to the east.

173 What has been the history of the inhabitants of this land?

[776] They believe that long, long ago, *Alquntäm*, the supreme god, caused their first ancestors to be created in his house, *Nusmät·a*, in the land above, and sent them down to populate the Bella Coola valley. These first people came in groups of two or three, brothers and sisters, or occasionally man and wife, each group descending, in many cases in animal form, to a certain mountain and then making their home at its foot. They brought with them animals and fish, tools and houses, also the knowledge of ceremonial dances. In fact, they differed from the Bella Coola of the recent past only in having greater supernatural power. These first people increased with extraordinary rapidity, until each group grew into a village, bound together by a knowledge of their first ancestor. In 173 361 course of time the occupants of certain villages combined, as some increased more rapidly than others, but on the whole each settlement maintained its character of being the descendants of one group of the first settlers of this world.

[175] This mythological belief is a fair picture of Bella Coola life as it was when the first white man visited the valley. Mac-

kenzie, making his memorable overland trip to the Pacific, 173
records coming upon Indian villages at every few miles of his 361
course. Boas describes the way in which the inhabitants of 175
each of these claim to be descended from one group of ancestors.

Though it is impossible to estimate the former population 161
of the Bella Coola valley with any degree of accuracy, it must have been in the thousands. In 1923 there were surviving rather more than three hundred individuals, who live in one village on an Indian reserve near the north bank of the Bella Coola River, about a quarter of a mile from the sea. In the last century the
tribe was stricken with smallpox, and since then consumption, [164]
venereal disease, measles, and other diseases of the white man [177]
have taken their deadly toll. Changed conditions of life and [182]
decay of the rich ceremonial around which centred their interests in the old days are also contributory factors in their decline. Within the last few years, however, the population has begun to increase.

BELLA COOLA VILLAGES

The following list of Bella Coola villages was obtained. 361
In an effort to learn which had been deserted in recent years, [124]
the writer always asked whether or not a town was occupied
at the time of Mackenzie's visit, an event of such great interest [175]
to the grandparents of the older people that the memory of it is still preserved. Villages said to have been occupied at that time are marked with an asterisk.

Three rivers empty into the head of South Bentinck Arm, 133
which is about one mile in width (see Plate 7). The Bella Coola, flowing from the east, enters at the southern edge, and the *Nulpqotskmax-e* winds in from the north to the opposite angle of the head of the fiord. This stream, "The Nearest
River" of the Bella Coola, so-called because of its proximity [103]
to the sea, is shown on maps as the Necleetsconnay. Between the mouths of these two is the *Pe·aih*, a small stream rising

133 on the northern side of the Bella Coola valley, east of the Necleetsconnay. Before merging their waters with North Bentinck Arm the three flow more slowly and there are extensive tide-flats (see Plate 8). Several villages formerly clustered

361 around their mouths.

(1) *Q̣ámeux*: on the west bank of the Necleetsconnay about three-quarters of a mile from the sea. Nothing is known of this long-abandoned village of which even the name is uncertain. The mountain that rises behind its site is called *Q̣ámeux*, and it is supposed that the village had the same designation. Some of the older people state that there was no town, only a temporary hunting station, at this spot.

(2) *Tsoálhmq*, "Short Feet": on the very shore of North Bentinck Arm, west and north of the mouth of the Necleetsconnay. The fiord terminates in a tolerably square end, running north and south, and this town was at the northern edge. It was built on piles and the inhabitants could step to the ground only at low tide. This is the explanation given of the peculiar name, a reference to the curtailed walking space. Long ago it was a large town, but was probably occupied only during the winter. In summer the people are believed to have

[166] moved to *Numám-ai*, "The Place of Flies," on the north side of North Bentinck Arm, about one mile from its head.

*(3) *Álqalátl*, "The Fenced Town," so called because it was

[712] stockaded: near the south bank of the *Pə-sslo*, about a quarter of a mile from the sea, near the site of the present mission church. It was inhabited until about 1870. According to one informant this village was founded by a certain *Tásleswam*, a descendant of *Taiakmaia*, who decided to move close to the river.

(4) *Tlopo-al*, "Small Mound," so called from the knoll on which it was situated: above *Álqalátl*, and about one-half mile to the north of the present Bella Coola River. Its site is crossed by the road connecting the Indian village of Bella Coola with the white settlement of the same name.

(5) *Ánutsqwa·xstl*, "Labretted": the eastern continuation of the last mentioned.[7] The name is explained as follows: 361

One of the people who came to the earth in the beginning of time, *T̂aiakwala* by name, travelled to the Skeena River, and there saw women wearing labrets. On his return to Bella Coola he settled at *Ánutsqwa·xstl* and carved on his totem-pole[8] the figure of a woman with an abalone-shell labret as a memorial of his voyage. Visitors coming to his potlatches named the town from this figure. [173]

This was one of the largest towns in the valley.

?*(6) *Aimä·ts:* a small town to the north of the last, not far from the *Pe·əslə*. It is assumed that it was founded by a descendant of *T̂aiakwala* named *Aimä·ts*. The consensus of opinion is that it has not been occupied for many years, but one informant recently dug up a clay pipe on the alleged site. [172]

*(7) *Slskiutl*, "What Has Been Divided": on the south shore of the Bella Coola River about a quarter of a mile from the sea. This village was founded by a certain *Q̇eil*.

*(8) *Q̇omqo·ts*, meaning doubtful, perhaps "Salty": this, the most populous village of the valley in the recent past, is still inhabited by one or two families. The inhabitants of other towns explain its large population by marriages with slaves. This is the upper, or eastern, continuation of the preceding, and the two in combination formed a row of houses stretching for three-quarters of a mile (see Plate 9). [162 58 2 56]

(9) *Osəsxkpəmx*, "The Treeless Place": on the north side of the Bella Coola, supposedly about half a mile above *Aimä·ts*. This village was long ago deserted.

(10) *Tcuxlcuxwtelpa·ts*, "Where There Is Much *lcuxlcuxwtelp*," a kind of hollow-stemmed plant: some distance from

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[7] Several towns, each consisting of a single row of houses, are regarded as forming two villages. In such cases there is no visible boundary mark.

[8] The Bella Coola believe that their early ancestors used totem-poles; repeated references to them will be made, even though the work of Barbeau and others on the recent origin of totem-poles on the North-West Coast indicates that the Bella Coola concepts are not historically accurate. [778]

361 the north bank of the Bella Coola,[*] near the lower slope of the mountain, and about three miles from the sea. It is probable that there was a town at this spot very long ago, according to the statement of one old man, and the numerous repositories (II, p.8) in the vicinity support this view.

[173] [778] *(11) *Sɩnxł*, "Sunny," or "Fallen Sun": on the south side of the Bella Coola opposite the preceding. It was deserted about 1907. This was a fairly large town, though never as big as *Q̇omqo·ts*. The name is derived from Sun, *sɩnx*, and there are two explanations given for it. One informant states that the name came from the many revelations of the Sun to the first people there; another that the first chief, said to have been named *Ställɩmx̣*, erected a large totem-pole, decorated with the figure of a sun. This blew down, in consequence of which the people called their town *Sɩnxł*, "Fallen Sun."

*(12) *Sqomełł:* on the south side of the Bella Coola about three miles from the sea, and a short distance below the end of the present bridge. The meaning of the name is unknown.

[164] [173] *(13) *Tcɩmotł*, "Where the River Is Sufficiently Deep to Cover the Stones, but Shallow Enough for Rapids": the upper continuation of the last-named. It was deserted during the smallpox epidemic. The name of the chief who came there at the beginning of time was given as *Ṫswakilak*.

(14) *Sno'oniqwɩlx̣*, "On the Point": on a curving promontory on the south bank of the river about four miles from the sea. It was long ago swept away when the river changed its course.

[133] (15) *Nu'ex̣mäq̇*, "The Place of Foul Water": on the north bank of the Bella Coola a little above the preceding, at a place where there were a number of stagnant pools between the river and the mountains. No one knows how long ago this town was abandoned, but as the names of people living there figure in stories which are said to be of no great antiquity, it

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[133] [*] The river frequently changes its course, so that village sites now at a considerable distance from it may once have been on its banks.

was probably deserted not many years ago. Probably a large town since it was a good fishing place. 361

(16) *Ṫsılkt*, "Bald Eagle": also on the north shore of the river, a little above the last-named. Probably washed away by a flood long ago, although traces of the salmon-weir were still visible recently. [226]

(17) *Nuqāx̣māts*, "The Place of Much *qāx̣māts*" (the fern *Asplenium cyclosorum*): on the north side of the river about one mile above the preceding. This large town is believed to have been deserted long ago, though, in apparent contradiction, traces of it are said to be still visible. [137]

*(18) *Snuləli*, "The Place of Dog Salmon": on the south bank, above the last-named, at a place where a small stream enters the Bella Coola River; this divided the town into two sections. It was long deserted and the river has carried away that part of the village below the creek. The name is derived from an enormous dog salmon which is believed to have been seen at long intervals in a waterfall near this spot, always with a water ouzel perched on its back. [825]

(19) *Oq̓mikımx̣:* on the lower end of the island near Hagenburg post office, eleven miles from the ocean. Although long deserted, traces of this village can still be seen. The meaning of the name is unknown.

*(20) *Nukils*, "The Place of the Whirlpool": on the south side of the river, eleven and a quarter miles from the sea. It was a village of moderate size, recently abandoned. The first occupant was said to have been *Łkamkila*, which means, "The First of All." [173]

*(21) *Ȧsān·ān·i*, "The Concave Town," so called because it spread around the shore of a bay scooped out by the Bella Coola: south side, slightly above the influx of the *Nusālsım* River, thirteen and a quarter miles from the sea. It was deserted about 1880.

*(22) *Nusq̓alst*, "The Place of *Sq̓alstutl*": on the north side of the river, opposite the mountain of the same name. It also was deserted about 1880. *Sq̓alstutl* is a kind of stone suit- [316]

361 [316] able for axes, which occurs in the valley of a small stream on the slope of the mountain.

*(23) *Nulleax*, "The Place Where There Are No Falls": an affluent from the north enters the main Bella Coola about thirty-one miles from the sea and the town was located on this creek about two hundred yards above its junction with the Bella Coola. The ruins of this moderately large town were still [175] standing about 1870. Mackenzie reached the Bella Coola River at this place. At the time of his arrival the population was [166] larger than usual, because the salmon-weir had withstood [226] some heavy freshets which had destroyed several weirs on the Bella Coola, and driven the inhabitants of other villages to *Nulleax*.

[133] It is said that the affluent at *Nulleax*, the stream *Xaiqts*, is the only one in the whole Bella Coola valley that does not drop precipitously into a ravine leading to the main river. Its source is a spring at the end of a pocket-like valley, at the base of steep cliffs, but it does not fall down these. The town is named from this circumstance. The area around the spring is called *Nusnāxunxkt*, and it is said that some families living on the Skeena sing of it as the spot where their first ancestors came to earth, although their descendants do not know where it is located.

*(24) *Stuix:* on the point between the *La'xulx* (Atnarko) and *Sla·kl* (Whitewater) rivers which join to form the Bella Coola. This, the most populous of the upper river towns, was deserted not long ago. The meaning of the name is unknown.

(25) *Qulliatl*, "The Place of Herbage": on the north side of the Atnarko River, a few hundred yards above the forks. This small town was deserted many years ago. The name was [137] given on account of the hill behind the village being covered with a rank growth of plants and small bushes, but no trees.

[133] (26) *Snulla·tl*, "The Place of Falls," so called from the strong rapids of the Atnarko at this point: on the north side [173] of the river about ten miles from the forks. This large town was long ago deserted when a large rock in the midst of the

stream, on which the salmon-weir rested, was carried away.[10] 361

The following village may be included with the above: [173]

(27) *Nusxeq:* on the shore of North Bentinck Arm, to the east of the creek that flows into it at Green Bay. This long-deserted village was built so close to the ocean that high tides reached almost to the houses. According to one informant, the name was derived from that of the first chief sent down [173] from above to that spot; while another connected it, etymologically, with *Nusx*, the name of the barren district some four and a half miles up the valley of the creek. In recent years this village site has been used only as a summer camp.

The name given to the Bella Coola valley is *Nux̣ālk*; that 101 given to the inhabitants of the valley, excluding those of village 103 no. 27, is *Nux̣ālkımx̣*.[11]

Two points must be considered with regard to the above 128 list of towns: In the first place, can it be regarded as an 173 accurate list, or do the towns belong to the realm of mythology? 361 In the second place, are the customs and beliefs of the inhabitants of the different towns sufficiently similar to be described without reference to local differences?

The first question is difficult to answer. The Bella Coola undoubtedly consider the existence of these towns to be an historical fact, but so do they regard the peopling of the earth by men created in the land above. Nevertheless, the above list appears to be substantially correct. The Bella Coola, although now collected into a single village, still remember their ancient homes. One man, for example, stated as a matter of course that he was a man of *Snuləli*. Further inquiry elicited the information that he had been born at *Sɪnxl*, where his [164] father had moved at the time of the smallpox epidemic. It later appeared that my informant's father was born at *Tcɪmotl*, [166] had married there, and that it was his father who had moved

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[10] This explanation may be only legendary.

[11] Boas, p. 49, states that *Nux̣ālk* is only applied to the lower villages of the [114] valley. All the writer's information was contrary to this view.

128 from *Snutɬi*. My informant's grandchildren regard them-
173 selves as *Snutɬi* boys, and their names are embodied in myths
361 of that village, although their forbears have not lived there
166 for five generations. There is no reason to suppose this case
exceptional. Other instances were obtained of movements of
people from one village to another at earlier times, and there
seems no cause to doubt the general accuracy of these. Names
[554] embodied in the origin myths of different towns are used as
prerogatives and have been potent factors in keeping their
memory alive. Uncertainties and inaccuracies there must be
in the foregoing list, but on the whole it appears to be fairly
reliable, since few contradictions were received from different
informants.

128 Accounts obtained of the same ceremonies from the descen-
184 dants of people of different villages were found in most cases to
be identical. There were a few differences in custom between
[796] the people of *Stuix* and those of the other upper valley towns
on the one hand, and the inhabitants of the lower valley on
[101] the other. These will be mentioned when necessary, but on
the whole the inhabitants of the Bella Coola valley can be
considered as a tribal entity.

114 Boas (p. 48) gives a list of Bella Coola towns which agrees
fairly well with the above. Among his villages are included
361 *Pe-aɬɬ* (no. 4), *Nuɬxustskwan-e* (no. 7), and *Nusālsɪm* (no.
16).[11] All the older people agreed that these are the names of
streams, though settlements located on them may have been
known by the same designations. Names of the five villages
recorded by Boas, nos. 6, 8, 9, 19, and 24, were not known by
several old men questioned on the subject.

101 The villages of the Bella Coola valley did not form a political
619 unit; each was independent. A common language was spoken
throughout and the inhabitants of the different towns recog-
[631] nized that their origins and customs were similar. This was
[197] also recognized to be the case with regard to the people living
on South Bentinck Arm, and at the head of Dean Channel.

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[11] Using in each case the spelling of this monograph.

Indians from both of these areas were interviewed and it was 101
found that, except for minor details in certain beliefs, their 619
customs were identical with those of the Bella Coola proper.
Accordingly, in this monograph, the term "Bella Coola" will be taken to include the inhabitants, not only of that valley, but of South Bentinck Arm and the head of Dean Channel. Those living on South Bentinck Arm will be referred to as *Tāl·io* people, the Bella Coola term for them; those of Dean Channel as Kimsquit, the name by which they are generally known. It is an anglicized form of the word *Kımxkwıt*, meaning "Canyon," by which the Bella Bella designate the people of Dean River.

VILLAGES ON SOUTH BENTINCK ARM

(28) *Sātlia:* on the east side of South Bentinck Arm, about 361
a quarter of a mile from the point that marks its junction with
North Bentinck Arm. Food was obtained from an ocean fish- [226]
trap.[13] Long deserted except as a summer camp.

(29) *Qankılst*, "Island": east side of South Bentinck Arm,
slightly north of the island opposite the Hot Springs on the [133]
west side of the fiord. The town took its name from this island.
In summer the numerous inhabitants lived immediately oppo- [226]
site it, at a place where they had an ocean salmon-trap; in [221]
winter they moved to a fortified spot at the base of a mountain
slightly farther to the north. This village was blotted out by [731]
a landslide one spring long ago, and the few survivors were
unable to re-establish it.

*(30)[14] *T̓saoltmem:* on the east side of the fiord about four
miles above the last-named. A small town, whose inhabitants
lived on the catch from their ocean fish-trap; it was recently [226]
deserted.

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[13] Ocean fish-traps work as follows:—A pen is made by a series of stakes, into which the salmon enter at high tide. It is then closed and, as the falling tide lays bare the mud, the imprisoned fish can be scooped out by hand or in hand-nets.

[14] Mackenzie did not visit either South Bentinck Arm, or Kimsquit, but it will be [175]
convenient to continue the use of asterisks to mark those towns which are said
to have been inhabited at that time.

361 (31) *K̓xdis*, "Ocean Fish-Trap": on the east side of South Bentinck Arm, about a quarter of a mile from the *Nuikʷ* River. [226] It is doubtful whether this was a town, or merely a camping place of the people of *Nuikʷ* when using their salmon-trap.

*(32) *Nuikʷ:* on a raised mound at the south side of the mouth of the *Nuikʷ* River, which enters the head of South Bentinck Arm from the east. The meaning is unknown. [731] [164] This was a populous town until the inhabitants were decimated by an epidemic of smallpox.

*(33) *Tăl·io:* on the west side of the mouth of the river of the same name which flows into South Bentinck Arm from the south. [133] The location of this village was constantly changed, owing to destructive variations in the course of the river. It was formerly a large town, and has been deserted only since 1900. This village had another name, *T̓qwantlos*, "Facing," so called because its houses faced those of the town of *Nuikʷ*.

*(34) *Ăs·uxʷ*, "At the Head": at the head of South Bentinck Arm there is a bay running south-west, into the upper end of which a small stream empties. [487] The trail leading to the lake at the head of Rivers Inlet follows this valley. *Ăs·uxʷ* was located on this creek, at some little distance from the ocean; the name was derived from the geographical location of the town. It has not long been deserted and must have been a populous place to judge from the numerous repositories (II, p. 8).

(35) *Q̓wapx:* on the east side of the mouth of a creek flowing into the bay at the head of South Bentinck Arm, from the south. This town was of moderate size. The meaning of the name is unknown. It is thought to be in the Rivers Inlet language.

VILLAGES AT KIMSQUIT

[133] Two rivers, the Dean from the east, and the Kimsquit from the north, flow into the head of Dean Channel, and the villages of this area can be grouped according to the two rivers.

Villages near the Dean River 361

•(36) *Anutlılx:* the present site of the Kimsquit Indian village near the mouth of Dean River. The meaning of the name could not be learnt.

•(37) *Nuləl*, "Canyon": on the shore of Dean River at the bottom of the canyon. This large town was only recently deserted.

(38) *Āẋet·i*, "Occupied Mound": on the south side of Dean River about one mile from the sea. This small town was deserted many years ago. The name is derived from the small mound on which it was built.

•(39) *Nutsqwalt*, "Many Spawning Sockeye Salmon": on south side of Dean River, about one and a quarter miles from the sea. A large town recently deserted.

•(40) *Nusqāpts*, "Place of Many Spring Salmon": on south bank about twenty-five miles from the sea. This spot was not [173] settled when people first occupied this world, but later *Ālquntām* (I, p. 330) took possession of it.

(41) *Iẋwunk:* east side of river twenty-eight miles from the sea. There is doubt about this town. It is said to have been a colony of the Kimsquit River settlement, a statement difficult to understand.

(42) *Siwal·os*, "Where Canoes Are Left": on the north side of the river about thirty-five miles from the sea. Immediately opposite was *Sulkelta*, "Winter Trail." These two are considered as forming one town, but were probably never more than camping grounds at the spot where the winter trail to the [487] interior left the river. It is possible, however, that they formed a town, since the names of the alleged first settlers in [173] the beginning of time are preserved.

•(43) *Āsklia:* at Salmon House on the upper Dean River.

The history of the villages on the upper Dean is puzzling. 174 Mythological accounts of their founding were obtained, and some of the older people stated that they had been occupied until recent years. On the other hand, there are apparently

174 reliable traditions of Carrier settlements there. The probable explanation is that the Bella Coola formerly extended over the area, either in actual fact or according to mythology, but were supplanted by the Carriers.

175 The Dean River is called *Nulxl*, and the generic name for
[101] the people of the Dean valley is *Sutslmç*. About eighty years
ago a smallpox epidemic so reduced the villages on the Kima-
[164] quit that the survivors abandoned them and moved to the
Dean. At that time a certain Kimsquit man is believed to
[731] have said: "We will take their places and kill even their dogs."

Since that time, the joint settlement has suffered one
[164] epidemic after another, until a mere handful of the people
[731] survive, and they are almost entirely descended from the
Kimsquit River immigrants. Within the last few years, these
have requested permission from the Bella Coola to abandon
Kimsquit entirely and live among them. The two groups have
[628] always been on the best of terms, but the Bella Coola have not
forgotten the fate of the Dean River people and have been
unwilling to admit the Kimsquit survivors.

Villages on the Kimsquit River, Sä·tsk'

361 *(44) *Sä·tsk':* this large and important town, at the mouth of the river, was deserted at the time of the smallpox epidemic.

*(45) *Nuxwulst:* this settlement can be grouped with the last-mentioned, although situated on the shore of Dean Channel, at the site of the present Manitou Cannery, six miles away. No meaning of the name is known.

TRIBAL ORGANIZATION

619 The subject of this monograph is the people of the above forty-five villages. They will be referred to as a *tribe*, and as this term is customarily limited to a political unit, a brief justification for its use is necessary.

242 Each Bella Coola village consisted of a single row of houses,
361 built along the shore of a river or the ocean. The front doors

opened out on to a wooden platform, which served as sidewalk 342
and extended from one end of the settlement to the other. 361
The outer side of this structure was always supported on piles; in fact, in many cases, the houses as well as the whole sidewalk were thus raised from the ground. This type of construction was necessitated by the sloping sites of the villages, but had the added advantage of being a protection against attack. The villages differed in size from insignificant settlements of three to four houses, to ones with twenty or thirty, each containing several families. The ease with which the red cedar could be split and worked into large planks made possible the construction of these large, rectangular houses which, with their horizontally laid walls and sloping roofs, presented a picture of stability and relative comfort superior to that of most Indian habitations.

Each village was practically an independent political unit. 631
Neighbouring settlements had many common interests which 628
threw them into contact with one another, but there was no organized cohesion between the towns of the Bella Coola valley, or between those of *Tāl·io* and Kimsquit. There was still less to draw these three groups together. There was no supreme chief and no governmental meeting of the tribe as a whole. Not only were the three divisions not bound to support one another in war, they were often at loggerheads among themselves. Indeed, bloodshed between towns of the Bella Coola valley itself was not uncommon. Moreover, each group tended to merge with its neighbours. The *Tāl·io* people fre- 523
quently married with the Rivers Inlet and the Bella Bella; 648
the Kimsquit with the *ʟtlámx*[*] of Dean Channel and the Kitlope of Gardner Canal; and the Bella Coola of the upper valley with the Carriers.

In spite of these inconsistencies, the application of the word 619
tribe is justifiable for the following reasons:

A. Linguistic. All spoke the same language. There
were dialectical differences among the people of Bella Coola, [197]
Tāl·io, and Kimsquit, but each group could understand the

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[*] To avoid unnecessary symbols, capital ʟ has not been used.

619 others. This differentiated them clearly from all neighbouring [197] tribes.

B. CEREMONIAL. A member of a secret society in any of [575] the above towns was accepted as a member in any other one. [609] A person of another tribe, even if known to belong to a comparable society, was treated as an uninitiated person.

C. ORIGIN AND RELIGION. The people of Bella Coola, *Tāl·io*, and Kimsquit felt themselves to be akin through acceptance of the fact that their ancestors had been created together in the beginning of time. [771] This marked them off with great clearness from all other tribes, especially from the Carriers of the interior. This belief formed a sentimental and religious bond of great strength.

NEIGHBOURING TRIBES

648 It is desirable to describe, briefly, the tribes with which the Bella Coola came in contact.

THE CARRIERS

East of Bella Coola, amid the mountains of the interior, roved the Carriers. In summer they often came down to the river valley to fish or trade for salmon, and in winter they were sometimes forced by cold and starvation again to visit the Bella Coola, Bella Bella, or Rivers Inlet people. There was a [563] good deal of intermarriage between them and the inhabitants of the upper valley, so that the wanderers were able to spend the cold months with relatives. None the less, the Bella Coola [186] considered these people utterly foreign in habits and beliefs, [578] and to call a man a "Carrier" was, and still is, a deadly insult. The Carriers lacked the rich ceremonial life of the coastal peoples who, therefore, regarded them with scorn and contempt. [796] The presence of a few of the much-despised Carriers was, however, almost necessary to the correct performance of the winter dances since they were uninitiated spectators whom it was necessary to impress and delude.

THE BELLA BELLA

West of Bella Coola lived the Bella Bella, known as *alpmlāxmq*. Although linguistic differences prevented free exchange of ideas, and active hostility was not unknown, there was considerable intermarriage between the two tribes. The Bella Coola recognized the similarity of culture between them; in fact, whereas a Carrier was despised for lack of knowledge of ceremonial and dramatic matters, a Bella Bella was respected for his superior lore in that respect. The Bella Coola believe that many of their rites have been obtained from them.

BC 648 BB 101 525 BC 569 186

The chief Bella Bella villages are said to have been: *Ḳwatna*, on "Kwatna" Bay; *Nā'mu*, at "Namu"; *Ḳwiyai*, four miles from the last-mentioned; *Nalaw*.

BB 361 141 369

At *Ḳwatna*, the nearest settlement, so many of the people spoke Bella Coola that it was practically bilingual. There had been so many intermarriages for generations that the people were not considered foreigners; in fact, Boas includes it among Bella Coola villages (p. 48). There were seven villages on Kwatna Inlet and the Kwatna River which flows in from the south-east.

BC 569 648

(1) *Sinalḳumitl*, "Where It Spoke": a small outpost on the eastern shore of Kwatna Inlet near the entrance. There may once have been a permanent settlement at the site, but for many years it was used only as a look-out station when raiders were expected.

BB 173 361

It is said that on one occasion, long, long ago, a party of Kwatna people was encamped at this spot, waiting for enemy raiders whose approach had been reported. They did not appear when expected and one of the watchers, wearied by the long wait, said to the genital organs of one of his female companions who had annoyed him:

"Tell us what is going to happen."

"You will all be killed to-morrow," answered a rumbling voice from the organs, to the great amazement of everybody.

So it transpired. The hostile raiders surprised the watchers the next day and only one escaped to tell the tale.

The place has since been known as, "Where It Spoke." It was long ago deserted.

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948

NES Bellacoola

Bellabella NES

361 [173] Another version of the same incident relates that a voice came from a woman's anus to warn the party of their approaching doom, without a question having been addressed to it. The settlement was abandoned in consequence.

*(1) [illegible], "Occupied Mound": on an island in Kwatna Inlet. One elderly man stated that the ruins were still standing within his father's life-time. This village was peculiar in having separate burial-grounds for chiefs and commoners. [764]

(2) [illegible], "Place of Many Boulders": a large pile-built village on the shore of Kwatna Inlet, north and east of the mouth of the river. At high tide the ocean penetrated under the stagings and swirled among the many boulders there from which the town was named. It is said that there was once friction between the people living at either end of the village, and that a ditch was dug to separate the hostile sections. The place was long ago deserted.

(3) [illegible], "House of Tiers": on the east and north side of the Kwatna River about half a mile from its mouth. A large, semi-subterranean house with many platforms stood in the centre of the village, from which its name was derived. The place was long ago deserted. [342]

(4) [illegible], "The Place of Big Stones in the River": on the same side of the river, about three miles above the last-named. It was a large town in the distant past. The situation was at a place where the river was very dangerous, with large boulders projecting above the surface of the water.

*(5) [illegible]: about a mile above the preceding, on the same side of the river, immediately above a small creek. This town was deserted at the time of the smallpox epidemic. The meaning is unknown, and it is thought the name, [illegible], is in the Bella Bella language. [164]

*(6) Name unknown. The largest town at Kwatna was about one-half mile above the preceding, where the river forks. It was practically wiped out at the time of the smallpox epidemic.

At each of these river villages was a salmon-weir which furnished the chief article of diet.

[164 / 173 / 226 / 262]

1: McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948

NE6 Bellacoola NE6

Bellabella NE5

THE *ustámx*[1][a]

BB
BC
563
361
[164
181
187]

Before the smallpox epidemic, about 1863, there were towns on the fiords and villages of Dean Channel between Kimsquit and Bella Bella. The inhabitants were called *ustámx* by the Bella Coola, and *utsinly* by the Bella Bella. Their settlements were at Elcho Harbour, Green River, Cascade Inlet, and at several unidentified places. Their language is said to have differed slightly from that of the Bella Bella, but the people themselves married freely with both Kimsquit and Bella Bella, thus forming a connecting link between these tribes.

A list of *ustámx* towns was obtained from one old man, who claimed to be a descendant of the people. It was impossible to verify this information, and since he himself was not an ideal informant, the following can be regarded only as approximately correct.

(1) *Ilkto*: at Elcho Harbour.

(2) *Kilōte*: on a fiord one mile above the last-named.

(3) *Illek* or *Yaqwa·t*: on a river three miles above the preceding.

(4) *Numaisk·a*: on a river two miles above the preceding.

(5) *Nuxpali*: on a fiord three miles above the preceding.

(6) *'Omikw*: on a fiord three miles above the preceding.

(7) *Sxwmlk*: on a river two miles above the last-named and thirty miles below Kimsquit.

According to the old man from whom the above list was obtained, *Nuxwmlc*, at Kimsquit, recorded earlier as village no. 41, was also populated by *ustámx* people. There was so much intermarriage between the two groups that it is now impossible to ascertain whether the inhabitants not only of *Nuxwmlc*, but of *Sxwmlk* as well, were predominantly Kimsquit or *ustámx*.

BC
154
153
[648]

The open pictures in which the Bella Coola River rises has always made travel possible for long distances, so that not only

1[a 'Bellacoola term for the people of mixed
a Bellabella - Kimsquit stock who inhabited
the shores of Dean Channel' - see
2: McIlwraith, vol. 1, p584 - Analyst]

136 the neighbouring Carriers, but Chilkotin as well sometimes
464 descended to the valley. On the coast, though the dense under-
[648] brush prevented travel along the shore, the long fiords, shel-
tered from the open Pacific, were ideal for the use of canoes.[16]
[501] Comparatively lengthy journeys were neither difficult nor
648 uncommon. The *Tál'io* people were usually on amicable
terms with the inhabitants of Rivers Inlet, and the Kimsquit
with the Kitlobe. The Bella Coola were accustomed to attend
[574] potlatches at Alert Bay and Fort Rupert,[17] Knight's Inlet,
and Bute Inlet, receiving their hosts, in turn, at Bella Coola.
On the other hand, there was little friendly intercourse with
the northern tribes, of which the Kitkatla especially were dread-
ed by the residents of the central coast. Until recent years the
Bella Coola had no direct knowledge of other Salish-speaking
peoples, although some of the Chilkotin told them of a tribe
living far to the south, in the interior, whom they encountered
in some of their wanderings and used to term *Nuxálk·mx*, recog-
nizing the similarity between their language and that of the
[197] Bella Coola. A few years ago several Bella Coola attended a
[891] boarding-school and were amazed to find that many of their
words were understood by fellow-students from Chilliwack.

648 To sum up: The Bella Coola were in close contact with
177 the neighbouring coastal tribes, with the members of which
they felt themselves to have cultural affinities. They recognize
that they have received many ceremonial rites from their
neighbours, and must have adopted other elements of culture
which they now consider indigenous. It is probable that cer-
tain Bella Coola customs must likewise have been transmitted
to other tribes, but such lie without the scope of this mono-
graph. The outlying villages were in close contact with foreign
neighbours, and tended to assimilate elements of their culture,
[101] but, on the whole, the Bella Coola present a tribal unity with
distinctive local customs, falling within the general pattern of
coastal culture.

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[16] For types of canoes, see Appendix A.

[17] The principal Kwakiutl village.

CHAPTER II

RELIGION

The Universe—Supernatural Beings—Supernatural Elements in Human Beings—Means of Propitiation

THE UNIVERSE

ONE of the subjects about which Bella Coola philosophers pondered in former times, and about which definite information has come down to the present generation, is the universe. The young people, who have absorbed a certain amount of education from the white man, are scornful of the beliefs of their fathers, but it was possible to obtain the following information from a few of the older men and women. 772 [177]

They say that the earth is circular and flat, like an island. What it rests upon is problematical, though the assumption is that it is water. The world is kept from capsizing by the supernatural being, *Sninia*, who lives amid the ice in the far north; he grasps a rope to which the earth is fastened, and he keeps it steady by maintaining a tension on the rope to hold the world against his feet. Long, long ago *Sninia* was seen by human beings, but in later years no one has penetrated to his distant home and the Bella Coola have little regard for him. It was in the distant past, also, that human beings discovered the earth to be round, after certain semi-supernatural men had made a circuit of it. The four corners of space have not the same importance to the Bella Coola as they have, *for example*, to the Indians of the Plains. It is only through questioning that the investigator learns that the East is regarded as the top of the world, the South is the sun at its zenith, the West is the bottom, and the North is nothing, merely the opposite to the south. These beliefs play little part in the lives of the people. [776] [823]

Above our earth stretches an inverted dome, its edges resting on those of the world. This dome, the sky, is called

772 *snq·ᵋ*. If the Bella Coola were strictly logical, one should expect them to conceive the upper surface of *snq·ᵋ* as being convex. Instead, it is considered a flat surface, very similar to the earth, and no explanation is given of what fills in the spaces between the dome, concave as viewed from this world, and the upper plane which could rest only on the peak of the [811] dome. But logical accuracy is not a Bella Coola characteristic. This flat land is called *áłcmc·ᵋłł* or *maxmq·ᵋ nusmłłquł*. It is illuminated by a second sun, shining on it as the sun does on the earth. Far in the east of this upper region are extensive tide-flats. This land above is the home of many supernatural beings, who will be described in due course. The [821] relative position of the sun to this upper world is ill-defined. According to some accounts, it travels by clearly marked trails on the surface, and a transparent dome is postulated to explain how its light reaches this earth. Others state that it moves like a bird or flying canoe through the space between the world and the dome-sky above. On many of these points there is a [598] striking difference of opinion, which the Bella Coola explain [424] by saying that their information is derived from ancient stories, which are personal possessions, and that no one knows the beliefs of his fellows. A co-ordinated theology, as Boas points out, has not evolved among the Bella Coola.

772 The sky, as it may be called if the reader will bear in mind 773 that it is the underside of a flat land, was not always in its present condition. The Bella Coola say that long ago the [776] supreme god instructed his Carpenters (I, p. 35) to make a sky. They started from the eastern extremity of the earth, but after a considerable part of the dome had been erected, it fell with a thunderous crash, because no supporting posts had been set up. The part that escaped this calamity is called *Salmalcum*. Undiscouraged, the Carpenters continued their work with the assistance of posts and so built the sky as it is seen today. Then the supports were taken away.

772 As already stated, a sun shines on the land above. As that 821 seen by mortals is attached to the land above, so is this upper

are attached to another land above the one of which our sky 772
is the underside. Boas (p. 28) has described this upper land [821]
in some detail. A number of Bella Coola were questioned on
this subject, but for some time no one could be found with 772
knowledge of its existence. At length one of the older people 184
remembered that a man who had died some thirty years ago
had a personal story connected with it, and later a Kimsquit
man was able to furnish definite information. He explained
that in his family there was a myth dealing with this matter; [124]
others might have heard this myth, but since it was not their
property, of course they would not be able to impart the facts
contained in it, nor would they necessarily believe it. Consequently,
an upper land, superimposed above that which is
immediately over the earth, cannot be described as a Bella
Coola belief; it is shared, so far as could be ascertained, by
only two families.

The chief feature of this uppermost world is its distance 772
and unapproachableness. To the supernatural beings living
in the intermediate land it is a far-off place; in fact, their
attitude towards it corresponds to that with which mortals
regard the land above their own. The supernatural ones can,
when they wish, visit this upper world, which is called *Nuqwlcáh*.
A sun shines there, but it is a different kind of sun from [721]
that known to mortals. On the whole it appears that this
upper sky-land does not differ materially from either the earth
or the land immediately above. No human being has ever [775]
reached this distant land, so what little is known about it was
brought down in the beginning of time by the first people.

In addition to these two upper worlds, the Bella Coola
know of one, or perhaps two, below. One of these is inhabited [775]
by ghosts.[1] It somewhat resembles the earth, but is unsubstantial
and ethereal. It is considered to be immediately

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[1] At the present time the Bella Coola are in a state of transition between the old beliefs and the new. This concept is held only by the older people, so it might be more accurate to describe it as one which they, the tribe as a whole, used to have. It has been thought advisable to use the present tense throughout in recording customs and beliefs which are now rapidly passing away. [778]

1:McIlwraith E-3 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

772 776 beneath the Bella Coola valley, and the land of the living forms a dome over it corresponding to that of the sky over this world. But everything is reversed. A river flows in the land of ghosts, but it rises in the west instead of the east; when it is warm on this earth it is cold in the land below; when it is sunrise here, it is sunset there. Shamans are believed to have penetrated frequently to this land, and on information from them the Bella Coola base their beliefs. [756]

772 There is another land beneath the ocean. In this live the fish and sea mammals in human form, as well as other beings to be described in the next section of this chapter. Like all other worlds it has a sun above it,[1] and conditions are said to be similar to those existing on this earth. The Bella Coola are uncertain whether this underseas world is at the same level as the land of ghosts, and whether or not it extends beneath the rivers. [821]

821 Although Bella Coola concepts regarding the sun and other heavenly bodies will require further consideration, it will be convenient at this point to describe them in outline. The sun is regarded as a heat-radiating ball of such intensity that a human being cannot approach it. Its path, as it crosses the land above, varies from day to day until it reaches its limits at the solstices. As it travels, it is accompanied by the drumming of two *Alilikan*, supernatural feminine beings who remain continually, one in the east and one in the west. According to most informants, the ends of the sun's course, though fixed and invariable from year to year, are not marked by any visible means. Others state that at each limit there is the mouth of a *sninq*, a mythological animal of enormous size. [774] [776]

The moon is thought likewise to travel[2] each day but is said to be very cold. Few stories are current concerning it, although the Bella Coola say that long ago a man tried to reach it, only to be driven back by the intense cold. A shaman who died not many years ago claimed to have received power [756]

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[776]
[1] One informant stated that no sun served that purpose.
[2] The *Alilikan* drum as it travels, as they do for the sun.

133

PLATE 1

Photograph by H. I. Smith, *National Museum of Canada*

Mouth of the Bella Coola valley looking west

[p 26 (a)]

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

PLATE 2

115
142
291
307

Photograph by H. I. Smith, *National Museum of Canada*

Joshua Moody

[p26(B)]

PLATE 3

115
142
302
291

Photograph by H. I. Smith, *National Museum of Canada*

Captain Schooner

[g 26 (c)]

PLATE 4

115
142
291
302

Photograph by H. I. Smith, *National Museum of Canada*

Jim Pollard

[#26 (0)]

PLATE 8

[326(E)]

Photograph by H. I. Smith, National Museum of Canada

On the Bella Coola about ten miles from the sea

133
137

PLATE 6

[p.26(F)]

Photograph by H. I. Smith, *National Museum of Canada*

Looking across the Bella Coola and up a side valley about three miles from the sea

PLATE 7

Photograph by H. I. Smith, National Museum of Canada

Looking down North Bentinck Arm. The river on the right is the Necleetsconnay, the Bella Coola enters at the extreme left.

[7 26 (G)]

PLATE 6

133

[p 26(a)]

Photograph by H. I. Smith, National Museum of Canada

The tide-flats at the head of North Bentinck Arm from the moon and stated that there were mountains and snow on it. It is commonly stated that the marks on the moon represent a man carrying a bucket. 821 [756]

The stars figure but slightly either in Bella Coola mythology or thought; it is not even known who made them. Two in the Great Bear constellation are called respectively *Tpikois* and *Xompoma*, "Little Girls." A lone star in the same part of the sky, named *A'lox*, is said to be following the girls to the forest for illicit intercourse. [778]

Moon, stars, and above all the sun, were, and still are to a certain extent, used by the Bella Coola in computing the passage of time. There are no individuals with the definite prerogative of keeping count of time, but formerly wise old men used to do so.[9] Differences of opinion were the rule rather than the exception, a condition which often led to bitter disputes concerning the proper date for starting the winter ceremonials. Boas (p. 47) has recorded the Bella Coola calendar in greater detail than the present writer has been able to do. The making of calendrical observations is a lost art, and the following list of the months was all that could be learnt. It will be noted that these agree with Boas in regard to the months in the early part of the year, but not in those between the summer and winter solstices; no explanation is offered for this disparity. 805 821 [554 578 146 114 778] [114]

First moon after the summer solstice: *Sikálamtal*, which has the significance, "The Time for Sockeye Salmon to Ascend the River."

Second moon after the summer solstice: *Sl'islalst*, "The Time for Eating Dog Salmon."

Third moon after the summer solstice: *Sl'ixmai'sit*, "The Time for Eating Cohoe Salmon."

Fourth moon after the summer solstice: *Siqklpam*, "The Time for Gathering Fern Root," or *Sidakms di Âxalikimalois*,

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[9] Kimsquit informant stated that there were professional calendrical experts in his town when he was a young lad although members of the kusiut society (II, chap. 1) sometimes attended to this matter. [575 468]

805 "The Coming of *[illegible]*."[1]

821 Fifth moon after the summer solstice: *[illegible]*, "The Time for *Kusiut* Dances,"[2] or *[illegible] di [illegible]*, "The Gathering of the Supernatural Beings."

Sixth moon after the summer solstice: *[illegible]*, "Sits Down," that is, when the sun reaches the solstice.

First moon after the winter solstice: *[illegible]*, "What Sweeps Away Food," or *[illegible]*, "Angry Moon."

Second moon after the winter solstice: *[illegible]*, "Facing in Both Directions," that is, half the month belongs to winter and half to summer, or *[illegible] di [illegible]*, "The Potlatch of the *[illegible]*" (I, p. 184).

Third moon after the winter solstice: *[illegible]*, "When Herrings Spawn." These fish are said to have arrived on the [825] same day of this moon as the winter solstice in the December one.

Fourth moon after the winter solstice: *[illegible]*, "Time for Making Salmon Weirs."

Fifth moon after the winter solstice: *[illegible]*, "Time for Making Hand-Nets for Olachen."

Sixth moon after the winter solstice: *[illegible]*, "Time for Eating Spring Salmon." It is in this month that the summer solstice occurs.

The chief difficulty experienced by the Bella Coola in computing time rests on the fact that each month is judged by the moon, whereas the main periods of the year depend upon the solstices. One old man, from whom much of this information was obtained, stated that trouble always came at the winter solstice when the month was divided into two sections. The above list is obviously incomplete and incoherent, but it was the best available.

Supernatural Beings

776 771 In any primitive community the social, religious, political, and economic aspects of life are so interwoven that they

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[1] See vol. II, p. 8 for a description of this mythical being.

[2] See vol. II, Chap. 1, for a description of these dances.

cannot be considered as distinct subjects; not only does this 128
present difficulties to the investigator in the field, but it also 771
makes it no easy task to describe the facts as obtained. With many tribes it is possible to deal first with the social life, and later with religion, shamanism, and other associated topics. Such a form of presentation has many advantages and would, if possible, have been followed. Unfortunately, the social organization and rank of the Bella Coola largely depend upon their religious beliefs as expressed in their mythology, and an understanding of at least the main features of these is essential. In this chapter a summary of these has been made, leaving for later description personal relations with the supernatural world and other points which do not profoundly influence the beliefs and practices of the whole community.

Like other peoples, the Bella Coola differ considerably in 771
the fervour of their religious beliefs. But even allowing for individual variation, religious experiences and beliefs are matters of frequent occurrence and profound importance to the great majority of the tribe. The supernatural world is close around them; a sudden thought is caused by the intervention of a supernatural being; the peculiar action of an animal is an occurrence fraught with grave meaning; an unexplained sound always receives a supernatural explanation.
The old beliefs survive even among members of the community 177
who are nominal Christians, and those who hold to their ancient 771
religion live in an atmosphere of the supernatural. The white man, whose scientific training and logic lead him to find a natural explanation for an incident, is puzzled and somewhat amused at what he often calls the childish beliefs of the Indian. The Bella Coola, on the other hand, seeing the hand of the supernatural in every untoward event, considers the attitude of the white man in seeking a natural explanation to be almost irreverent. The mental attitude of the Bella Coola to the supernatural does not differ vitally from that of the white man under like conditions; but whereas to white men religious experiences are most unusual, they are common occurrences to

177 the Indian. A native convert, for example, finds no difficulty
771 in understanding the Old Testament, for the frequent manifestations of the supernatural are like those to which he has been accustomed. One intelligent Indian went so far as to say that he was a better Christian than any white man because he believed every word in the Old Testament, while he had heard that white men doubted the historical accuracy of some of the stories there recorded.

The following incident illustrates rather clearly the attitude of the Bella Coola towards the supernatural. A few years ago a party, consisting of a number of Indians and one white man, was proceeding by canoe up Dean Channel. On the shore, some distance ahead of them, they saw what seemed to be a grizzly bear with its pelt showing the white sheen so much desired by hunters. Hoping for a shot at the animal, they paddled in behind a long point which offered a hidden means of approach. But as the canoe cautiously rounded the tip, within easy rifle range, all that could be seen was a white water-washed stump, somewhat resembling a bear in shape. To the white man it was obvious that they had all been deceived by this resemblance in the distance, but to the Bella Coola it was equally obvious that the bear had changed into a stump. A bear had been there, they had seen it, now there was a stump: "The bear must have changed itself," they said.

771 If the reader grasps the mental attitude which explains an
* 776 optical illusion as a manifestation of the supernatural, he will be able to comprehend the important part played by supernatural beings in the lives of the Bella Coola. Creatures of this type, some anthropomorphic and others zoomorphic, range not only the mountains and forests of British Columbia, but also the waters beneath and the sky above. Their true home is on the flat country above the sky; most of them are merely visitors to this world. Supernatural beings of all kinds are termed *siut*. The attitude of Indians towards them, and their concepts concerning them, can best be understood by the stories in vol. I, chap. x, and vol. II, chap. v. Bella Coola beliefs are

not systematized; if a man is asked about the powers or func- 771
tions of a certain supernatural being, he will usually answer by 776*
recounting a story in which that being appears. What is known
respecting many of the lesser supernatural beings depends upon [424]
information contained in stories, and as many of these are [184]
personal possessions, it follows that there is tremendous vari-
ation in individual knowledge. Psychologically, this is of little
importance; there are enough supernatural beings for every-
one to know some of them, and to expect to meet or hear them
in the forests. To insert many of the stories contained in later
chapters would break the sequence of description; all that is
here attempted is to give a general summary, in a way foreign
to Bella Coola thought.

Supernatural beings are by no means all-powerful. It is 776*
true that they have miraculous powers and can work weal or
woe to human beings who chance to come in contact with them,
but likewise they may sometimes be overwhelmed by mortals
armed with objects steeped in human essence, such as a blanket
which has been worn until it is impregnated not only with the
smell, but the physical being of its owner. In particular, [756]
shamans or other mortals of great strength have been able to
conquer the supernatural ones. Consequently, it may be said
that although supernatural beings live on a plane different
from that of mortals, they are not omnipotent. Long, long [773]
ago, man was able to come in contact with them more fre-
quently, but that golden age when the semi-mythical ancestors 776*
of the Bella Coola were living has long since passed away, 178
though it is only within the last few years that such beings,
particularly supernatural animals, have become comparatively
rare. The Bella Coola give three main reasons for this:

(1) Supernatural animals do not like the sound of muskets and have moved far away.

(2) With increasing dependence on the canning industry, fewer hunters penetrate into their haunts in the distant parts of the mountains.

(3) The younger Bella Coola no longer take pains to purify themselves as a means of placating supernatural beings.

* 776 According to the general Bella Coola belief the supernatural ones may be classified as anthropomorphic beings, zoomorphic beings, and supernatural members of the vegetable and mineral kingdoms.

ANTHROPOMORPHIC BEINGS

The Bella Coola agree that the most important of their supernatural beings is *Äḷquntäm*, the supreme deity, maker of men and animals. He is most commonly known by this name but he has other appellations with reference to his various functions. The word *Äḷquntäm* is said to be derived from *[illegible]*, "foreman," or "chief." He is chief of the supernatural beings. Other names by which he is known are as follows:

[illegible], a word derived from *[illegible]*, the Sun. This name is used almost as commonly as *Äḷquntäm*.

* 776 538 *Smaiyaikila*, "The Story Man," because *Äḷquntäm* created the ancestral myths at the same time that he created mankind. The supreme deity is called *Smaiyaikila* with reference to his membership in the *Kusiut* society of the supernatural beings.

Smaiyakila, "From Whom Come, and To Whom Belong, All Myths." As creator of the highly valued myths, the supreme deity is owner of them.

* 776 *[illegible]*, "The Wise One," "The Thoughtful," or "The One with Great Mental Ability."

[601] *[illegible]*, a word supposedly derived from *[illegible]*, "Father," with the suffix *[illegible]* as a term of endearment. This is used in praying to *Äḷquntäm*.

[601] [788] *Tätä*, "Father," the term for father used by a child; this, like the last, is used in prayer.

[illegible].

[illegible], "The Adviser."

[illegible].

[illegible], "The Light Giver."

[illegible], "The Moon Chief."

These names are not meaningless synonyms; all, or at any upon most of them, are carefully used in accordance with the functions of this supreme deity. As a Bella Coola has many names, corresponding to his membership in various societies, his professional prerogatives, his ancestral myths, and mere nicknames, so has *Alquntäm*, who is a superman, many names, according to his special functions. It would be unthinkable for a Bella Coola to pray to *Alquntäm*, yet it is common for him to pray to *[illegible]* or *[illegible]*, other names for the same being. The multiplicity of functions and designations approaches the point of obscuring the unity of *Alquntäm*, which in fact, some Bella Coola even deny. They state that *[illegible]*, *[illegible]*, *Smaiyakila*, and *[illegible]* are one, but that *Alquntäm*, *[illegible]*, and *[illegible]* are three distinct supernatural beings. This seeming confusion presents no difficulties to the Indian, since each family has its own myths in which such facts are recorded. He believes them, without questioning those of his neighbours, and it is even possible for an individual to believe two contradictory statements, if he happens to become the owner of two contradictory myths. Evidence collected in the field does not make clear whether the beliefs of the Bella Coola illustrate an incomplete transformation of a single deity into a number of minor ones, or whether they represent the almost complete fusion of a number of beings into one. Following the practice of the great majority of the Bella Coola, the supreme deity will be referred to as *Alquntäm*.

776* [551] [782] [illegible]

The most obvious attribute of *Alquntäm* is connected with the sun. He can enter it and use it as if it were his canoe. In form he resembles a man, and when he takes charge of the sun it appears as if the latter were a large, self-propelling, cedar boat with windows through which he looks forth. It is said that long ago he allowed mink to take charge of the sun, but the malicious animal ran it so close to earth that the intense heat killed almost all living creatures. When *Alquntäm* enters the sun he wears a cloak, on the lining of which are salmon; spreading this causes the rivers on earth to teem with salmon.

776* 821 [825]

* 776
Alquntäm is occasionally, but inaccurately, called *Snx*, the Sun.

773
Though *Alquntäm* often sojourns in the sun, his home is in the flat land above the sky, a huge house which figures
* 776
prominently both in Bella Coola mythology and present-day thought. The name of the house is *Nusmät·a*. It resembles those constructed on this earth, but is boundless in size. Like
[553]
the houses of human beings, its name is changed according to what is taking place within. Every autumn the supernatural beings gather there to await the coming of *Alquntäm* at the winter solstice; while waiting they pass the time by performing the equivalent of the earthly *kusiut* dances (II, chap. i). This assemblage is termed *[illegible]*, and the house, during this period, *[illegible]*.

The following names of the house, with meanings, were obtained:

Nusmät·a, "The Place of Myths."

[illegible], "Where Everything Was Begun."

[illegible], "The Place Whence Came the Falling Down."

[illegible], "The Place Where Mankind was Made."

[illegible], "The Place Where *Alquntäm* Speaks."

[illegible], "The Place of the *[illegible]*."

[illegible], "The Place of Meeting," or "The Council House."

[illegible]. The meaning of this word is unknown.

[illegible], "The Moving House." The significance of this last name rests on an ancient myth in which the house is described as travelling from place to place.

773
* 776
To grasp the significance of these designations it is necessary to understand the beliefs of the Bella Coola concerning the creation. Their mythology contains no account of the origin or birth of *Alquntäm* himself, nor of the making of this world; in the beginning of time no living creature, either animal or vegetable, existed with the exception of *Alquntäm*. He, therefore, decided to alter and populate the world and

accordingly created four supernatural Carpenters. They in turn made a number of workers, *[illegible]* contemporaneously. These beings, endowed with enormous power by *Alquntäm*, chiselled from wood a number of human beings, the forefathers of mankind. Some men state that this was done by the four Carpenters, but the consensus of opinion seems to be that they were merely supervisors. No explanation is given of the means used by *Alquntäm* to give life to the beings thus created. The workers made not only human bodies, but constructed their mentality, including the speech. *Nusmat·a* contains a large number of rooms, in each of which a different set of Indians, with a different language, was manufactured; thus is explained the diversity of tongues among the people of British Columbia. The Carpenters did not confine their attention to men and women. Supernatural beings, animals, birds, trees, flowers, fish, mountains, rivers, perhaps even moon and stars, all were created almost simultaneously by them under the direction of *Alquntäm* in *Nusmat·a*. The sun alone was not made in this way. *Alquntäm* chose the proper plumage or fur for each bird and animal, which the Carpenters painted and carved according to his instructions. As they provided men with different languages, so they furnished the birds and beasts with their speech, which man can no longer understand. Each was given the necessary tools for existence on the earth below; sharp incisors to beaver, strong talons to eagle, a penetrating eye to heron, and so on. The Bella Coola do not regard birds and animals as being of a lower order than themselves, for all were created by the same power, at the same time; in many respects they consider that they belong to a higher plane than human beings. It would be too great a digression to include at this point a number of myths describing the creation, but these will be found in vol. I, chap. vi.

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Mythology does not record in detail the sending down to this earth of trees and plants or of the forefathers of all other Indian tribes; but the manner in which the first Bella Coola arrived is clearly stated. Around the walls of *Nusmat·a* were

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775 hanging a number of bird and animal cloaks, representing ravens, eagles, whales, grizzly bears, black bears, and a few others. *Alquntām* asked each individual which of these cloaks he preferred to wear. One selected a raven, another an eagle, and so on. Each donned his choice from the wall and immediately became the bird or animal chosen. *Alquntām* gave each man or woman one or more names, and some food in compressed form; then sent him down in avian or mammal form. Even the animals could travel through the air like birds, and each landed on the peak of a mountain in the Bella Coola country, took off his cloak, and reassumed human form. The discarded coverings floated back up to *Nusmāt·a*. A few individuals, instead of coming to earth in animal form, swarmed down posts which stretched between the worlds.

777 773 This myth is fervently believed by the Bella Coola. Even Christian Indians, though they readily admit the biblical creation as applied to the white race, remain convinced of the manner in which their own ancestors came into being. At the present time, though most ancient beliefs are rapidly passing away, few, if any, Bella Coola doubt this account of the creation of their forefathers. Their conviction rests not only on the religious aspect of their life, but on the sociological. A man's [554 424] most treasured possessions are the name brought down from above by his ancestor in the beginning of time, the knowledge of the form taken by that ancestor, and information about the place where he landed. A collection of myths of this kind is given in vol. I, chap. vi. Lacking knowledge of his first an- [illegible] cestor's form, a Bella Coola has slight chance of becoming a chief; such lore is the birthright of every descendant of one of those first people, and those without it are almost certain to be the offspring of slaves. The social aspects of creation myths will be described later; at this point a broad outline must suffice. *Nusmāt·a*, "The House of Myths," is the place in which these myths were made, and are now stored, two reasons for its importance in the eyes of the Bella Coola.

[776] *Nusmāt·a* is not only connected with the history of an indi-

vidual's ancestors; it enters into his own future as well. When 177
a Bella Coola dies, his spirit (I, p. 94) travels back on the 773
path of his ancestors from generation to generation until it 775
reaches the spot where the first one came to earth; there it assumes the bird or animal cloak used on that occasion and floats aloft to *Nusmät-a* to live forever. Small wonder, therefore, that this house figures prominently in the thoughts of the Bella Coola, and that they cling tenaciously to a belief in it.

Knowledge of *Nusmät-a* has been inherited almost entirely 772
from the first ancestors of the Bella Coola, and only a few items of information could be gleaned concerning it. Most men think of it as an enormous replica of their own houses, but one individual, of philosophic temperament, expressed the opinion that it was without any inner partitions. His belief was based on the following incident:

> Some years ago a young man died without apparent reason. His 772
> sorrowing father kept wondering: 787
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> "Why has my son died? Can he have committed some crime or made some mistake?"
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> Despondent and grief-stricken, for a whole year the man did not wash, ate little, and slept on the floor. At last he wandered away, alone, into the mountains. Night overtook him and he lay down to sleep without food. His son came to him in a dream, telling him not to lament, that he was in a better place than this world, for *Älquntäm* had recalled him to *Nusmät-a* to use his voice, which was unusually powerful, as a means of conveying his wishes to the other occupants of the house. Thus comforted, the father returned home in the morning, washed, and again behaved normally. My informant suggested that cross walls would be a bar to the strongest voice, and that *Nusmät-a* must consequently be partitionless.

Nusmät-a contains not only the spirits of all deceased Bella 772
Coola, it is also the home of most of the supernatural beings. 776
These frequently descend to visit the earth, but always return [775]
to the house above. So far as could be learnt, the only being irremovably located there is an old woman, *Snulqulqäls*. The most prominent article of furniture in *Nusmät-a* is *Älquntäm*'s seat, in the central position behind the fire. Over it is laid

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948

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772 what is probably a moosehide, with salmon painted on it,
*776 symbolic of his guardianship of fish for the benefit of mankind. In other respects *Nusmāt·a* has no peculiarities. Behind the house is an enormous tree, *Tpinpin·iaqim*, in the branches of which live innumerable owls.

*776 After this description of *Nusmāt·a*, it is logical to return
[821] to its master, *Älquntäm*. Guiding the sun is his most spectacular occupation, but he also governs the movements of moon and tides. Powerful though he is, he continues to take an interest in the doings of mankind whom he created. Prayers
[782] are commonly addressed to him, and a certain type of shaman is believed to receive power direct from him. Other supernatural beings may work weal or woe to a Bella Coola, but he feels it is done with the sanction of *Älquntäm*. At every winter solstice he enters *Nusmāt·a*, where supernatural beings from all parts of the universe have gathered to greet him. This assembly is called *qalmais*, and *Nusmāt·a* is termed *Nusqalmaista*[1] for its duration. While waiting, the guests perform *kusiut* dances, similar to those carried out by members of the *kusiut* society on earth (see vol. II, chap. 1). At *Älquntäm*'s entry the heat becomes so intense that the occupants rush forth precipitately, some falling and being trampled upon in the crush. Only three[2] advisers, including *Sensenxälaix* (I, p. 41), remain to confer with him. They arrange the fate of human beings during the coming year; who shall be made a *kusiut*, who shall be born, who shall die. In each case the decision rests with *Älquntäm*, though he is influenced by his counsellors.
[787] Human beings can often learn in dreams what is being decided for them.

538 *Älquntäm*, in spite of his strength, shares the limitations
*776 of any other chief, and is not invariably successful. The Bella Coola delight in telling stories of how supernatural beings, especially the Raven, outwitted and defeated him. Even

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[1] Often pronounced *Nusqalmaista*.

[2] The exact number is uncertain.

human beings, in the beginning of time when they were semi-supernatural, sometimes prevailed against him. One story actually records his murder. From the point of view of morality, an angle from which the Bella Coola themselves do not regard him, *Alquntäm* is neither moral nor immoral; he has the virtues and vices of a man. That, in fact, is a fair summing up of *Alquntäm*; he is a superman, creator of life, supreme god in the sense that he is chief of the supernatural beings, but not an all-powerful deity. 776 [538]

Compared with *Alquntäm*, other supernatural beings are insignificant. The Bella Coola do not regard them as a hierarchy with definitely graded rank and power; accordingly, the order in which they are described is immaterial. Reference has already been made to the supernatural Carpenters.[9] There are four of them, created by *Alquntäm* in the beginning of time; it was they who constructed the mountains and rivers of this land, the animals and birds populating them, and supervised the making of mankind. They are considered to be four brothers, collectively known as *Masmasalänix*.

The eldest and most powerful is *Yalätimot*, "He Who Completes Any Task with a Single Smoothing Motion."

The second brother is *Mätlapälitsek*, "He Who Completes Any Task with a Single Stroke of an Adze."

The third brother is *Mätläpecek*, "He Who Completes Any Task with Two Strokes of His Adze."

The fourth and youngest brother is *atlatlatä*, "He Who Completes Any Task in a Single Day."

In Kimsquit, *Mätlapälitsek* is often called *Masmasalänix* and the collective term is not used. These names explain the beliefs of the Bella Coola with regard to the powers of the Carpenters. After their work in the beginning of time, the three younger brothers returned to *Nusmät·a*, where they have since resided, but *Yalätimot* came to earth and married a Bella Bella woman. The Bella Coola admit that members of this 186 [648]

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[9] Cf. Boas, p. 33.

776 [186] [641] tribe are superior to themselves in carpentry, and ascribe their skill to the fact that many of them are descendants of *Yulātimut*. Some of the coastal tribes are said to believe that *Älquntäm* erred in the manufacture of many of the sea mammals, giving them, for example, human heads on fish bodies; he later rectified this by sending his Carpenters to adjust their form. This is not a Bella Coola belief. One elderly man stated that the skill of the Carpenters in painting and modelling was derived from a little girl named *Ẓpolanas*; no confirmation could be obtained for this statement and the information was vague and unreliable.

Since their creation of the sky and many features of this world, as well as birds and animals, the Carpenters have entered but little into the lives of the Bella Coola. Like other supernatural beings, they are capable of going anywhere, but for many generations they have not been seen on this earth. [575] Their most important function, perhaps, is to act as patrons for various *kusiut* dancers. This subject will be described in detail in vol. II, chap. 1; for the moment it is enough to say that many supernatural beings regard members of this semisacred society as their protégés, and grant them power to [535] perform dances. On these occasions masked figures are used to represent the patrons, thus enlightening uninitiated persons as to the appearance and attributes of various supernatural beings.

Among the many residents of *Nusmāt·a* are two sons of *Älquntäm*, *Sāndliqumalds Älquntäm* and *Sni'alculc Älquntäm*. The former in particular is dearly loved by his father and is often spoken of as *Nusöwtanuwilum*, "The Cherished One." [575] These two beings take no part in the affairs of mortals except as patrons of *kusiut* dancers. Like all supernatural beings they are considered to be immortal. Since *Älquntäm* has two sons it is to be assumed that he has, or had, a wife. Her name is not generally known, although she is sometimes spoken of as [536] *Nusmāt·alst·a*, "The Woman of *Nusmāt·a*." There are also many stories describing his amours with human women resulting in semi-supernatural offspring.

One of *Älquntäm*'s principal functions is that of acting as leader of the *kusiut* dances of the supernatural beings. As already described, these take place in *Nusmät·a*, the name of which is changed to *Nusqulwaxaixts* for the occasion, while the supernatural ones are awaiting *Älquntäm*'s entry at the winter solstice. As soon as he comes, his extreme heat causes most of his guests to rush forth. Among those remaining is *Sexsexkälaix*, the Lawyer, his chief adviser in *kusiut* matters. This being is somewhat indefinitely regarded as a supernatural grizzly bear. He is subordinate to *Älquntäm*, and cannot himself initiate proposals, but he can interrupt the speeches of his superior if he feels bold. Human singers are under his special guidance. He is so powerful that if he turns his head in anger at any mortal, the latter falls dead. As far as could be learnt, *Sexsexkälaix* is concerned only with *kusiut* matters and never visits this earth.

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One of the most intangible of the Bella Coola supernatural beings is a woman, *Kämai ts, Äoatla*, "The Sorrow-Maker" or *Dji Sxmäsild*, "The Slave-Owner." Boas (p. 28) recorded fairly definite information about her, but the writer could gather only inconsequential fragments. Mortals are as slaves to her, but she takes little interest either in their welfare or actions. In the beginning of time, *Älquntäm* sent her down to earth to watch the behaviour of mortals and report to him. She needed a central location for this purpose and accordingly chose Restoration Bay, where she could watch the canoes as they passed up and down the coast. At first the inhabitants of the earth showed her great respect, but gradually she was ignored and canoes passed her home without stopping. Moreover, she began to fear that she might be injured by the proximity of mankind, and especially that human footsteps might contaminate and mar her supernatural frame. So she fled far to the south, whither no one knows. In fact, no one is even absolutely certain that she went to the south. According to a well-known Bella Coola tradition, a man once tried to climb Mount *Nusqälst* and found a pleasant grassy place near

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* 776 the top. He concluded that this must be the home of the woman. Before the door of her house, wherever it may be, there are miniature totem-poles which open their painted mouths and speak in the voice of the animal or bird portrayed. The writer did not hear that her home was in the land above [114] *Nusmāt·a*, as Boas (p. 28) states. At the present time knowledge of *Kāmai·ts* is so scanty that failure to confirm the previous observation is not surprising.

One or two passing remarks of elderly informants imply that *Kāmai·ts* may once have been more important to Bella Coola belief than she is now. One old man, already in his [775] dotage, stated that long ago the dead used to dwell in her house. Another declared that long ago prayers were addressed [782] to her, which is never done now. The word *kāmai·ts* is commonly used by the Bella Coola in a manner difficult to trans- [192] late. It serves as equivalent for "please" or "thank you," but has an underlying significance of a supernatural benison or appeal. It is not a word to be used in casual conversation; it is reserved for important occasions or times of emotional stress. The comparative unimportance of *Kāmai·ts* probably rests on the fact that she belongs merely to the realm of ancient history and has no sociological significance, even as the patron of a *kusiut* dancer.

772 Another supernatural being so far removed from this world that he enters but little into the lives of the Bella Coola, is * 776 *Sninia*. He is the male being whom *Ālquntām* sent down from above in the beginning of time to hold the earth in position, and who has since performed this duty. He lives among the ice of the far north, and has not been seen by mortals for many generations. He holds a rope fastened to the earth; when he is afraid that it has slipped slightly he takes a new grip and pulls the rope taut, pressing the world against the soles of his feet as he sits with legs extended, as a man would do to hold tight a kicking salmon. It is the tightening of the rope which [123] causes an earthquake. If *Sninia* should lose his grip entirely 575 the earth would capsize. He is patron ~~for~~ several *kusiut* * 776 dancers.

dancers. *Sninia* differs from most supernatural beings in having his residence in this world instead of in the land above. 776*

Among the beings dwelling in the upper region are a number of *Xemxemtnim*, whose function it is to ask the sun to appear every day. [821] It travels without their assistance, but if they neglected to arouse it, darkness would prevail all day. The only knowledge of these beings is derived from information given by the first people; they have not been seen by mortals since early days and do not act as patrons for *kusiut* dancers.

Heat and Cold are regarded by the Bella Coola as anthropomorphic beings, but their beliefs concerning them have not become crystallized, perhaps because of their non-appearance as patrons of *kusiut* dancers. The following story is told of the annual meeting of Heat and Cold. 776* 821 539

> Every spring Cold, *Swaslalats*, meets Heat, *Sqwlilaltus*, in some undefined locality and says:
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> "You will not be welcome in the place to which you are going [the earth]. I have just come from there. People like to get up on cool mornings to start work, they won't pay any attention to you."
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> But *Sqwlilaltus* replies: "No. They will welcome me. Everyone prefers to spend a few extra minutes in bed in the mornings. It is pleasant to do so when it is warm, hence I shall be welcome in spite of the eagerness of mankind for work."

In spite of its apparent definiteness, this account is regarded merely as a story, and it is doubtful if any historical accuracy is attached to it. The Bella Coola laugh when it is told, and the irony of the conversation is not lost on them.

S'pi', the Cold Wind, is another anthropomorphized being belonging to the realm of stories rather than to that of everyday life and profound belief. 776* 821 His wife is *Aläla*, and their child is Ice. On a cold morning, if a Bella Coola finds ice on liquid left in a bucket or other container, he warms it at a fire until he can lift off the sheet, and throws it out of the door, saying as he does so: "*Aläkw··*,* your child has become cold."

Both the North Wind and his wife, *sxlsxmaw-i*, whose home [773]

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*The vocative form of this word.

776 773 [821] is in the upper Bella Coola valley near Firvale, cause cold breezes by blowing them through their anuses. *Aslarman i* especially is a prominent figure in mythology (I, p. 670), but she has not appeared for many generations and her actions belong to legend rather than to either religion or social practices. It is said that she has four sons who once wanted to break a large number of grass stalks. Finding it difficult to do so on account of their toughness, they asked their mother to freeze them; she did this and destroyed every other plant at the same time.

776 821 177 [731] Another anthropomorphic being is *Sxd'lail*, the supernatural South Wind of winter who brings storm and snow. The Carriers affirm that every icicle which grows down until its end is in the snow is his walking-stick, and that to break one causes famine. Some Bella Coola have adopted this belief and carefully refrain from destroying such icicles.

776 Supernatural beings experience the same difficulty as mortals in reckoning the passage of time. A number of calendrical experts live in the land above, whose duty it is to record both months and years. They are called *Almooxhilhwaiyaix* or
[575] *Almooxhiltum*. They have been seen occasionally, and are shown, as masked figures, at *sisauk* (I, p. 180), but not at *kusiut* dances. Two of these beings always appear, and they argue about their observations after the fashion of humans.

Another denizen of *Nusmät·a* of slight importance in the social life of the Bella Coola is *Xemsomälsla*, a friend and
[575] associate of *Alquntäm*. He acts as patron of *kusiut* dancers, and in this manner is brought to the notice of mortals. In the land above his function is to cherish *Tläqmä·kc*, a being resembling a diminutive man, created by *Alquntäm* as a child to all supernatural beings. *Xemsomälsla* is its guardian or nurse; and for safety he usually keeps his charge in the far distant upper land above *Nusmät·a*, where *Alquntäm* frequently visits
[777] the two. In some mysterious manner, *Tläqmä·kc* has been known to reach this earth, giving good fortune to the lucky finder. He is in many cases spoken of as "The Cherished

One." An informant, wishing to emphasise the care lavished on this being, pointed to a photograph from an illustrated paper of Princess Mary, Viscountess Lascelles, bending over her infant. He remarked that this was the kind of attention shown by *Xemaxmálatla* to his charge. 776 * 1

Of slightly greater importance is the hermaphrodite, *Sxints*. He resides in the land above, and spends most of his time outside the walls of *Nusmā't-a*, acting as guardian to a number of young girls, the children of various supernatural beings. On many occasions he has descended to this world and has been seen by mortals, who recognize him by his peculiar nasal voice, intermediate between that of a man and a woman. It is supposed that human hermaphrodites have been affected in some mysterious way by their supernatural prototype. 776 * 838 838

Several informants stated that they had heard of hermaphrodites among other tribes, and thought that such existed among their own people in early times, but the term is usually applied, without physiological significance, to two types of individual supposedly affected by *Sxints*. Several cases are alleged of a male infant changing to a female on being washed and brought into the house. One of these, a girl about twelve years of age, was living in Bella Coola in 1923. The basis for these accounts is certainly error concerning the sex of a new-born child. The second class consists of those who desire to perform the work of the opposite sex. For example, if a boy shows an aptitude for women's work, the parents, realising that he wants to be a girl, dress and treat him accordingly. One informant knew of a Kimsquit boy, two Bella Bella, and several Kitimat to whom this had occurred. Henceforth they dressed as women, but in due course they took wives whom they helped in all feminine tasks. Another informant knew of two cases of the kind in which the men did not marry and were believed to have an aversion to women. One instance is known of a Kitimat woman who, having assumed man's costume and occupations, refused either to marry or to have anything to do with her own sex. Another case is of a Carrier 171 838

831 [771] woman who dressed as a man and used to hunt successfully, though she was married. Such practices are said to have been not uncommon among the Haida. The women were considered bold and independent, but the Bella Coola of today know little *[776] about them, and are not even certain that *Sqoats* is responsible for a female assuming the actions of a male. It will be readily understood that he is not regarded with much awe, nor does he influence their daily lives.

*776 [822] Another supernatural being, uninfluential though resident upon earth, is Echo, *Sxnalikt*, "The Voice Repeater." The Bella Coola regard him as a male being, in human form, and recognize his presence whenever sounds reverberate. He figures in mythology, occasionally appears as a masked figure at [575] *kusiut* or *sisauk* dances, but has neither helped nor harmed human beings for so many generations that he is accordingly neglected.

776 777 823 A supernatural being from whom many Bella Coola have had unpleasant visitations is *Sllimcila*, the cause of nightmares. He is a man-like creature with black face and an enormous head which he constantly scratches. His home is in *Nusmat·a*, but he frequently descends to this world and frightens sleepers. If a person scratches his head while asleep it is because he has just seen *Sllimcila* doing so, and if he walks in his sleep it is to escape this supernatural visitor. A sleep-walker is usually aroused by having a bucket of water thrown over him. [75] A person frequently troubled by *Sllimcila* can avoid him by painting a black circle around each eye before going to sleep.

*776 With the exception of *Alquntam*, the supernatural beings thus far described play little part in the lives of the Bella Coola. They believe in their existence, but do not expect to meet them, and do not believe that they exercise much influence on the course of their daily life. Supernatural beings of this ineffective type are exceptional. 771 A man goes into remote parts of the mountains, or even into little frequented areas around his *776 village, with mingled fear lest he encounter an actively malicious being, and hope that he may meet a beneficent one. Hence-

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948
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over, he is aware that by certain means he may have good expectations of beseeching, cajoling, deceiving, or rendering powerless any supernatural beings whom he may meet. This attitude is typical; the Bella Coola by no means move in constant dread of the mysterious denizens of the forests, nor do they eagerly hope for their appearance; they have their likes and dislikes, their moments of weakness and of strength, their times of greatness and of pettiness, all to be considered with care and forethought. 771 776.*

One of the beings for whom the older people have a profound respect is *Thicäpliliän-a*, a supernatural woman whose home is in *Nusmät-a*, but who frequently visits this earth. She can be recognized by her snout-like mouth and long, pendant breasts, but even when beyond the range of vision her proximity can be detected by her singing. *Thicäpliliän-a* often takes pity on a person who is dangerously ill and visits him, not only curing the malady but bringing the sufferer a name and song. In many cases he is thus made a shaman with power to cure. At other times *Thicäpliliän-a* bestows her favours on a person in good health, so that wise Bella Coola are always hoping to meet her. Such an experience is not without its dangers, for she is so powerful that nearness to her may be enough to cause death. The exploits of those who have come in contact with *Thicäpliliän-a* belong to shamanism and will be reserved for vol. I, chap. IX. 776* 787 [752]

Thicäpliliän-a, though her great power inspires fear, usually behaves in a kindly manner to mortals, who accordingly welcome her. But it is quite otherwise with *Ssaiaxmaa*, whose coming almost invariably brings death.[48] He is a black-faced being of repulsive appearance and sensual nature, whose chief function is to seduce women. For this purpose he often stalks near a village at night, and assumes the voice and appearance of a girl's lover to lure her into the forest. Fearlessly she goes with him, but if she allows his approaches, a hemorrhage results and she soon dies. There is said to be no limit to the number 776* 761

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[48] Cf. Boas, p. 45.

77% of his disguises. For example, he once appeared at New
76.1 Westminster in the form of a handsome white man; a Bella Coola girl yielded to his pleadings, but as soon as he had left her, she began to bleed and died.[79] He is so evil that shamans
[75] can rarely cure anyone visited by him. *Esniarmas* usually carries a stick which he need only to point at a woman to cause her death.

Nor are men exempt from *Esniarmas's* visitations. Sometimes he sneaks up behind a man and seizes his arms, so that he cannot see who has gripped him. He is soon released but no matter how quickly he turns around can never see his captor. Presently he begins to bleed from mouth and nose and death follows. *Esniarmas* may become visible under such conditions. One old man stated that his son had once been playing outside the village at Kimsquit when he rushed into the house weeping and saying that he had been seized by a black-faced man. In a few minutes his nose began to bleed so that his father knew it was *Esniarmas* who had visited him. Nothing was of any avail and the lad died. His approach is usually heralded by a series of grunting, explosive puffs, like those of a big bear rising sulkily. If, warned by the sound, the hearer turn sharply, he can escape danger. An informant described how, when camped on Labouchere Channel, he had once gone to the river for water with two companions, a man and a woman. They all heard these gasping puffs and turned, but he alone had jumped from the path quickly enough. The other two began to pant like *Esniarmas* himself; blood gushed from their mouths and genital organs and they soon died.

Like other supernatural beings, *Esniarmas* has his limitations. Though he comes to this earth he can travel only on fixed paths, invisible to mortals. If either a man or a woman is unfortunate enough to fall asleep on one of these tracks, it is

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[77] [79] A curious blending of aboriginal and white men's beliefs was recorded in connection with this incident. It is said that as the girl's seducer left her, carrying his hat in his hand, she saw two horns rising from his forehead and realized that her lover had been *Esniarmas*.

easy for *[illegible]* to gain control over them, and the sleeper wakes to find that he has been bleeding profusely and death is inevitable. This occurred to a man whose experiences are described in vol. I, chap. ix.

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Although *[illegible]* is usually a curse to mortals, he can also do good. Occasionally he makes a man a shaman, and in many cases he helps a woman in childbirth. Such beneficent acts are not sufficient to counterbalance his evil deeds, and he remains one of the most dreaded of Bella Coola supernatural beings, a monster whose machinations make camping in a strange place a dangerous undertaking, and who is as likely to strike down rich or poor, young or old.

[756] [844] [614]

Less feared than *[illegible]*, because he appears less frequently, is *[illegible]*. The Bella Coola speak of this being with trepidation, but little definite information could be obtained concerning him. He has human form and sometimes comes at dusk to cause death by carrying away a man's spirit.* The home of this creature appears to be beneath the earth rather than in *Nusmat·a*.

[761] [774]

A third dreaded being who, like the two preceding, usually lives on this earth and only visits in *Nusmat·a*, is *[illegible]*, "The Death Dealer." He, too, appears in human form and can be distinguished by the nose-ring which he always wears. Sudden death in the forest is always attributed to "The Death Dealer." If a man is engulfed by a slide, or killed by a falling tree, it is because this malevolent being has entered the slide or tree. Some Bella Coola say that he is responsible for animals who kill hunters. He rarely carries out his designs with the aid of sickness, nor is death by drowning often attributed to him, but for all other fatal disasters he must take the blame. While a corpse is resting in a coffin awaiting burial, *[illegible]* invariably sits on the cover, though none can see him. Instances are known in which even this monster has acted in a kindly manner.

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The supernatural beings thus far described are usually

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*See vol. 1, pp. 96 f.

* 776 encountered on land, but the sea likewise is the home of anthropomorphic creatures. Far beneath the surface is a land much [772] like the earth, inhabited by people resembling humans who sometimes assist a drowning person. The mysteries of this undersea world are known to the Bella Coola chiefly through accounts handed down from generation to generation, though its inhabitants have often appeared at the surface. Their hair is long and somewhat reddish, their bodies are hairless, and their faces are in many cases stained with black. One man stated that about three years before a Japanese, fishing near Namu, had caught in his net one of these people, a girl about two years old. He drew her into his boat, where she squatted on the bottom, docile and submissive. After a time the fisherman became frightened and threw his captive overboard. The [248] Bella Coola say that the Bella Bella, greater seafarers than [186] themselves, have more extensive knowledge of these undersea dwellers.

539 Similar, if not identical, beings live beneath rivers and lakes; they have often been seen on the surface, and occasionally, * 776 long, long ago, certain fortunate individuals saw their homes. Accounts of such are embodied in Bella Coola mythology and will be described later. The following can be considered an example of a simple type:

About three hundred years ago, *[illegible]*, a Kinsquit fisherman, built a pier-like framework, projecting into the Dean River, on which to stand while fishing for salmon with a long-handled[illegible] scoop-net. One August day he was using his net when, after a number of successful scoops, it became very heavy. As the net came to the surface he found, to his amazement, that a small boy was hanging on the rim. A number of people who had been watching from the shore, called to him to throw away his net with its uncanny load. Heedless of this advice, *[illegible]* tried to lift his net and, on finding it too heavy, began to draw it through the water so as to drag it out on the shore. All went well for the first few yards, till suddenly the boy shoved against the net, pushing the fisherman into the water on the other side of the pier. Immediately the supernatural one vanished from sight. As the bystanders rushed to

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[illegible] The handles of nets of this type are said to have been about thirty feet in length.

the rescue of *[illegible]* they saw him being carried downstream 776*
to a salmon-weir about three hundred yards below. The trap was raised [539]
at once, but it was too late; the rash fisherman was dead. No one could [761]
give a name to the supernatural being who had caused his death; it was merely one of those dwelling under the river.

Whales, too, are sometimes observed in the rivers, but [825] though they appear to resemble those of the ocean they are really their supernatural prototypes.

These human-like dwellers beneath the water can, as in [761] this case, cause death, but they are usually regarded as uncanny rather than dangerous. But there is one undersea being whom the Bella Coola regard with unmixed awe; he is *Ḳomoqwa* (see Plate 10), lord of the supernatural ones beneath the ocean, as *Alquntäm* is lord of those dwelling above. He lives in an enormous house under the sea wherein the fish, the sea-mammals, and the sea-plants have their home. The Bella Coola believe that these beings can take human form at will,[24] and assume that their behaviour in *Ḳomoqwa*'s dwelling corresponds to that of human beings in the house of an earthly chief. In the beginning of time, when men were more powerful 773
than in recent years, this house sometimes rose to the surface 776*
of the water and adventurous Bella Coola entered it on various occasions, leaving to their descendants tales of the wonders it contained. These accounts have become family myths and [424] are described with others of similar type in Chap. vi, vol. I. Records of this kind vary greatly in detail; in fact, few agree [184] more than in broad outline. Sometimes it is stated that denizens of the sea appear in *Ḳomoqwa*'s house in the flesh; other myths describe paintings of sea creatures around the walls and the manner in which these are brought to life by *Ḳomoqwa*. Irrespective of the exact details, it is clear that he is chief of the undersea beings who serve him and hunt for him, the blackfish being especially proficient in this respect. *Ḳomoqwa* resents any slight to his protégés and punishes any mortal who is unkind to them.

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[24] Bella Coola concepts concerning the transformability of men and animals will be described in the next section of this chapter.

*776 Although *Ḳomoqwa* has often been seen by mortals, no one has ever been able to describe his countenance. He always wears a huge hat, beneath which his blackened face, covered with eagle down, is barely visible, since he constantly keeps turning it away from the observer. Occasionally he comes to the surface and has been known even to walk on it. Like other supernatural beings, he is able to ascend to *Nusmät·a*, though it is not his home. The dread with which the Bella Coola regard *Ḳomoqwa* is due to his ability to suck canoes down to his home at the bottom of the ocean as if in a whirlpool. He is usually hungry, and nothing pleases him more than human flesh. None the less, he does not destroy life without cause. [502] [761] It angers him to hear his name spoken, so no Bella Coola utters it when on the ocean, for fear that he may be engulfed. Whenever a person is drowned at sea it is believed that the cannibalistic *Ḳomoqwa* has drawn him down for a meal.

539 *776 To insert the many stories describing *Ḳomoqwa* at this point would unduly break the continuity of this account, so the following simple example must suffice.

Not many years ago four Bella Bella fishermen were trying to anchor near China Hat. Owing to the action of the supernatural beings dwelling below, the bottom of the ocean rose and lowered abruptly so that their anchor would not hold as the rope was in many cases too short. They were much annoyed by this and, as they strove to fasten their craft, they were exasperated at a lord-fish which kept swimming closely around the canoe. At last one of the fishermen reached out, seized it with his hands, and tore it to pieces, throwing these back on the water. Presently their anchor held and the four went to sleep. But *Ḳomoqwa* had seen the insult shown to the lord-fish and, as they slept, he sucked down their canoe until, on awakening, they found themselves in the huge house of the lord of the undersea world. There was no water in it, but they recognized where they must be from the fact that the walls were decorated with paintings of marine beings and with ancient tools from canoes lost at sea. An old woman who lives in *Ḳomoqwa*'s house called the four to her fire in the corner and asked them whether they had any false hellebore with them. If they had, they would escape, but otherwise nothing could save them from *Ḳomoqwa*, who at that very moment was calling his friends for a feast of human flesh. Presently *Ḳomoqwa* entered, followed in succession by a number of undersea chiefs, including the dreaded [illegible], [illegible], in human form. As each came in, water swirled in and the canoe was tossed as if in a whirlpool; if it had capsized the occupants would have been devoured, but on each occasion one of the herring threw a mound of fake? [illegible] on the surface, which stilled the waves. At last Qomoqwa and his friends admitted defeat, granted the four fishermen the powers of shamans, and gave them certain prerogatives. 539 776 *

Though Qomoqwa is usually unkind to mortals, and is correspondingly feared, instances are known in which he has bestowed shamanistic powers for no apparent reason. The Bella Coola say that the Bella Bella know more about Qomoqwa than they do, since he is essentially an ocean being and the Bella Bella are ocean people. It is possible that the Bella Coola concepts of this supernatural personage are entirely of Bella Bella origin. This supposition is strengthened by the fact that Qomoqwa seldom appears in connection with the *kusiut* society, but frequently with the *sisaok* society, many of the rites of which came from Bella Bella. [756] 177 776 * [576]

Since human beings can travel on the sea only by means of canoes, it is not surprising that the Bella Coola think of supernatural beings as doing likewise. Their beliefs include at least three huge canoes, manned by supernatural beings. The most important is that of *Nusliptom*,* the name of its captain, whose crew consists of a number of supernatural birds and the hermaphrodite. Every year they come from the lands of the salmon and the herring, in the far west beyond the sea, and bear them to the coast of British Columbia. This belief, which runs counter to the conviction that *Alquntam* caused the animals and plants to grow, is merely one of the many inconsistencies of Bella Coola theology. *Nusliptom* comes every autumn on his way to attend the gathering of the supernatural beings in the land above, and his arrival in the Bella Coola River marks the commencement of the *kusiut* season. He is one of the most important of *kusiut* patrons and his powers and functions are described in the chapter devoted to that 773 776 * [579] soldiers. He does not often appear to mankind, though every Bella Coola knows of his existence.

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*Cf. Boas, p. 45.

Another supernatural craft is that of *W'ismiotsa*.[1] It, too, brings salmon and berries from their home in the overseas land. Knowledge of this canoe is limited to certain families who own stories connected with it, and it likewise serves as patron for [illegible] dancers. Although both *[illegible]* and *W'ismiotsa* can easily destroy human beings, they usually pay no attention to them, and have even been known to bestow supernatural power. *W'ismiotsa* will be described in greater detail in connection with [illegible] dances.

The third canoe is termed *[illegible]*, "The War-Party of the [illegible]," or *[illegible]*, "The War-Party of the Ocean." Its home is among small islands in the ocean. It is a large canoe, manned by invisible salmonlike beings, who are able to drive it at tremendous speed wherever they wish. The members of the crew are not in themselves dangerous, but the craft is greatly feared because it always transports *[illegible]*. This supernatural creature is about the size of a seal, [illegible] in colour, and of jelly-like substance. It lies in the bow immediately aft of the place from which water is bailed and constantly rolls to and fro, like an animated mass of repulsive jelly. Poison is constantly spreading from *[illegible]*, and anyone placed in the canoe soon becomes weak, begins to shake like *[illegible]*, and presently dies. This canoe is a source of danger to those with whom it may come in contact, and an even greater peril indirectly. The poison emanating from *[illegible]* kills clams and mussels in the vicinity and renders them unfit for food. In some cases they die at once, with open shells, and anyone finding them knows what has happened and does not eat them, but in other cases they live for a considerable period though saturated with the venom. If anyone eats these shellfish, he becomes flabby and jelly-like, and soon dies, unless a powerful shaman can conquer the poison. Sometimes when a party is encamped on the shore

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[1] [illegible]

[illegible]
[illegible]

of the corpse, one of the members is awakened by the rhythmical beat of the paddles of the War-Party of the Tide. If he is wise he at once calls out, "[illegible]." This serves to keep the War-Party at a distance, and to awaken the rest of the party who hastily throw on the fire objects which have been in contact with the human body. 776*
781

Many stories are told by the Bella Coola of the appearance of the War-Party of the Tide. The following can be regarded as typical. 231
776*

A few years ago, a Bella Coola named [illegible] and his wife, [illegible], were encamped at [illegible] Channel at the point known as [illegible] near the Hot Springs. They were discussing a private matter when, to the amazement of both, their dog, who was with them, joined in the conversation. This unnatural behaviour should have warned them of approaching danger and they ought to have killed the animal, or [illegible]. But [illegible] refused and presently they lay down to sleep. In some mysterious manner the dog was able to summon the War-Party of the Tide, which carried the two away. [illegible] Consequently, though she showed signs of insanity, she was cured. [illegible], on the other hand, refused to pay attention to the danger; within a few weeks he became crazy, and then died.

Quite another category of Bella Coola supernatural beings consists of ghosts. These beings, once human, have passed by death into the realm of the supernatural. Their home is the land below the earth, where they live like mortals except that everything is strange and abnormal. In form they resemble human beings, but their faces are green and weird. They can visit the land of the living at will, and make their presence known by whistling, which is their language. Their actions are the reverse of those of humans; for example, they often 775

775 walk head-downwards, or on their hands. Mortals sometimes see ghosts, but the apparitions seal their lips so that they cannot 764 recount their experiences. Death invariably follows. Shamans 754 and other mortals endowed with great powers have been able to penetrate to the realm below, and the knowledge of conditions there has been derived from their accounts. Food is scarce in that land and ghosts are often driven up to earth in 214 search for it. Even a small morsel is enough to satisfy their 775 hunger, so that mortals throw fragments on the fire for the benefit of their dead relatives. If a person drops a crumb it is because a ghost has knocked it away from his hand; no true Bella Coola ever picks up such a morsel, knowing that to do so would offend the hungry spectre. Deceased beings are 775 generally feared, although instances are known in which they have shown kindness, particularly to their relatives. Like so 779 many supernatural beings, they figure most prominently as [illegible] of [illegible] (see vol. II, chap. [illegible]). Further information concerning them is contained in the description of life after death.

776 777 Not even a complete list of beings would exhaust the beliefs of the Bella Coola concerning the supernatural, since any unexpected visitation is attributed to them in this [illegible]. For example, when Mackenzie appeared, the first white man with whom the Bella Coola had come in contact, they thought that he must be from another world. Some thought him a dead man returned to life, and others considered him a supernatural visitor from above who had fallen down to earth, as did their first ancestors. The latter view prevailed, and it was ultimately decided that he must be [illegible], a supernatural being [illegible] of whom little was known. This name was applied to him, and it has since been given to all white men.[illegible]

[illegible]

The religious concepts of the Bella Coola are not limited to explanations of strange apparitions, nor to knowledge of a wide range of supernatural beings, anthropomorphic or zoomorphic. Many in whom they believe are invisible and intangible, though none the less potent. Almost every incident of life is attributed to the help or hindrance of a supernatural agency. If a fisherman constructs a salmon-weir, with a considerable amount of work, the Bella Coola ascribe his success to the assistance of some supernatural being or supernatural power; mere labour would never have sufficed. If a man has phenomenal success in hunting, it is because the supernatural has helped him in some way. It is not necessary that an anthropomorphic being should appear; they seldom do, but none deny that in some form or another supernatural ones have aided the enterprise. 771 776 [226] [224]

This attitude is clearly evident in Bella Coola beliefs concerning the construction of canoes. Many professions depend upon prerogatives without which a person cannot hope to succeed. This is not true of canoe-makers, although it is a great advantage to one of them if *Yulatimot*, the Master Carpenter, appeared to his ancestors in the beginning of time. Even without this in many cases a man can succeed in making a canoe if he is aided by a supernatural teacher, or [illegible] [illegible]. No one knows much about this being, not even whether there is more than one of them, but it is through its kindly intervention that a man is able to complete his complicated task. If carpenters who have left a half-finished canoe in the woods, hear adze beats, as they are returning to it, they remain away from the spot, knowing that their work is being done with superhuman efficiency by a supernatural artisan. Under such circumstances even a ordinary man can construct one of the large, ocean-going canoes. [illegible] [illegible] a expert carpenter, named [illegible], was making 771 776 [463]

[illegible] [illegible], but his mother had told him [illegible] came down the Dean River when she was a young woman. As if to confirm this statement he added the inconsequential detail that [illegible], [illegible] killed and ate a dog, and [illegible]. 772 777

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* 776 one at Restoration Bay. He had reached the point where he needed help to turn the craft over, and one day, returning to his work, he heard the sound of many voices. He tarried for a few minutes, and when he reached his canoe it had been turned over as he desired.

On that occasion the beings who assisted the canoe-maker appear to have had definite form, and certainly to have displayed physical strength, but this extreme anthropomorphizing is unusual with respect to the assistance given to carpenters. The construction of a canoe is an arduous and difficult work; the person who has made one is regarded by his fellows with respect [554] mixed with envy, and it is tacitly assumed that he must have received more than human assistance. Considering the number of anthropomorphic beings known to the Bella Coola, it is not surprising that some individuals should assume that the successful carpenter must have had assistance from one of them, but to other Bella Coola the explanation would be in the intangible help vouchsafed to him by some kind of supernatural power.

* 776
828 Similar intangible power is believed to be evident in a person's thoughts. If a man receives either good or evil from a comrade it is his duty and privilege to repay. He intends to do so, but only a good man can carry out the resolution. What a white man would attribute to forgetfulness, procrastination, or lassitude, the Bella Coola say is caused by the intervention of *[illegible]*, who steals away his thoughts. It is doubtful whether this being is considered to have any definite form; rather he is a barrier, normally situated within the doorway of every house. The ideas of a strong man are able to surmount the obstacle, but *[illegible]* obstructs those of a weakling, and diverts him to matters of no importance.

792
* 776 Another intangible supernatural being is that which devours firewood. The Bella Coola say that no matter how well a fire may be provided with fuel when a person sits down to a meal, it is certain to be either out, or nearly so, when he has finished eating. The natural explanation does not satisfy

the Bella Coola. No one knows the name of the fire devourer, and it may be that he lacks form. Though ignorant of the law of conservation of matter, the Bella Coola realize that the wood must have gone somewhere, and postulate a land far across the western sea where burnt wood lies in shadowy heaps, each billet retaining its original form though it lacks material substance. This region is presided over by an evil being with a desire for human flesh (II, p. 468). 372 776 * [772]

The above list by no means exhausts the anthropomorphic beings resident either in *Nusmat·a* or in this world. Those described are the most important, and suffice to make clear the religious attitude of the Bella Coola to beings of this type. Others appear in connection with *kusiut* dances only, and a consideration of them can be deferred until vol. II, chap. 1, whereas some belong essentially to shamanism and allied subjects treated in vol. I, chap. 16. 776 *

ZOOMORPHIC BEINGS

The attitude of mingled hope and fear with which the Bella Coola regard their supernatural anthropomorphic beings is typical of their thoughts and actions concerning zoomorphic creatures as well. In the supernatural world the dividing line between human and animal beings is not clearly defined; fabulous monsters have the mentality of supermen, and can be appeased, besought, or cajoled precisely as are anthropomorphic beings. Like those of human form, supernatural animals can bestow good or evil on human beings with whom they come in contact. The division shown in this chapter must, therefore, be regarded as merely for convenience; it does not correspond to a distinction in the minds of the Bella Coola. [771] [128]

One of the most dreaded animals known to the Bella Coola is the *[illegible]*, a monster about the size of a large grizzly bear, with long, silky, beautiful hair, blue-grey in colour. It walks almost upright on short hind legs, so that its long fore-legs touch the ground at intervals; these are provided with sharp

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776 talons resembling, but larger than, those of an eagle. It has no tail. The great strength of these animals rests in the fact that their eyes revolve in their sockets, so that, when aroused, piercing beams shoot forth which strike senseless anyone on whom they fall. Having thus stunned its victim, the *sninik* picks him up and stuffs him into a broad-mouthed basket, carried on the back. It is provided with spikes inclined inwards and downwards so that a person thrust within cannot climb out. Human beings are carried in this way to the beast's lair, a cave in the mountains, where they are devoured at leisure. Wolves always accompany *sninik*; in fact, they may almost be termed attendants upon them (see vol. II, chap. 15). Like other supernatural creatures, *sninik* are impervious to most mortal weapons, but there is one method of overcoming them. If a hunter cut himself on the under side of his right leg so that the blood flows freely, and smears a bullet with this, it can kill a *sninik*. Similar success is gained by biting the tongue and coating the bullet with blood so obtained.

Another animal which is rendered powerless by the same charm is the *boqs*. This beast somewhat resembles a man, its hands especially, and the region around the eyes being distinctly human. It walks on its hind legs, in a stooping posture, its long arms swinging below the knees; in height it is rather less than the average man. The entire body, except the face, is covered with long hair, the growth being most profuse on the chest which is large, corresponding to the great strength of the animal. The most peculiar feature of the animal is its penis, which is so long that it must be coiled up and carried in the arms when the creature is walking. It terrifies its enemies by striking tree-trunks and breaking branches with its uncoiled organ. It is said that a woman was once drawing water 539
776 at the edge of a stream when a *boqs*, concealed on the other shore, extended its penis under the water to the farther bank and held intercourse with her. The contact rendered her powerless, as if turned to stone; she could neither flee nor remove the organ. Her companions tried unsuccessfully to

out the copper until one of them brought a [illegible] tool, whereupon the monster, dreading its razor-like edge, withdrew.

The following stories illustrate, better than any description, the attitude of the Bella Coola towards these animals.

Not many years ago a certain [illegible] was encamped with his wife and child in the Bay of the Thousand Islands, *[illegible]*, about two miles above [illegible], one of the haunts of boqs. He heard a number of the creatures in the forest behind him and seized his gun, at the same time calling out to them to go away. Instead, the breaking of branches and beating upon tree-trunks came nearer. Becoming alarmed, he called out once more: "Go away, or you shall feel my power." They still approached and [illegible] fired in the direction of the sounds. There followed a wild commotion in the forest, roars, grunts, growling, and the breaking of branches. The hunter, now thoroughly alarmed, told his wife and child to embark in the canoe while he covered their retreat with his gun. He followed them without molestation, and anchored his craft out far from shore. The boqs could be heard plainly as they rushed to and fro on the beach, but only the vague outlines of their forms were visible in the darkness. Presently, though there was no wind, the canoe began to roll as if in a heavy sea. [illegible] decided to flee to Restoration Bay, but before he had gone far his paddle struck the bottom, although he was in mid-channel. Looking up, he saw that the mountains were higher than usual; the boqs had, by their supernatural power, raised the whole area so that the water had been almost entirely drained away. They are the only supernatural beings with this power. [illegible] jumped overboard into water which reached only to his knees, and towed his canoe to Restoration Bay, the boqs following him along the shore.[1]

This is not the only occasion on which boqs have appeared near Restoration Bay. Within the life-time of the father of an informant, a chief set out with some friends from [illegible], bound for [illegible]. They travelled overland to Restoration Bay, thence by canoe, making the journey without incident. When returning, they decided to gather clams on the rocky point of the bay. As the craft shot around the tip of the promontory, they saw a boq gathering shell-fish. The paddlers backed their canoe behind some rocks whence they could search without being seen. The creature acted as if frightened; it kept looking backwards, then hurriedly scraped up some clams with its forepaws, dashed off with these into the forest, and came back for more. The chief decided to attack the animal. A frontal approach was impossible owing to lack of cover, so he landed and crept stealthily through the forest, armed with his Hudson's Bay Company's musket. Presently he stumbled upon a heap of clams which the animal had collected. He waited until it returned with another load, then raised his musket and fired. Instead of killing the *hajs*, its supernatural power was so great that the hunter's musket burst in his hands, though he himself was not injured. The *hajs* shrieked and whistled as if in anger, and at once hordes of its mates came dashing out through the forest. The frightened chief rushed out on the beach and called to his comrades to save him. They brought the canoe close to the shore so that he could clamber aboard, and then paddled away unharmed.

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[1] [illegible]

The Bella Coola believe that *hajs*, unlike most supernatural animals, have not abandoned the country since the coming of the white man. One man was most insistent that they still lived on King Island, and promised to point one out if a visit were made to that spot. This man refuses to camp at the place where, he affirmed, *hajs* are common. Another informant stated that though he had never seen one of the monsters, a horde of them surrounded his camp near Canoe Crossing for a week. Every night he heard them roaring and beating on trees and branches. A curious blending of old and new beliefs was revealed in connection with this statement. This man remarked that he was once gathering firewood when he heard the creatures closing in upon him. His head swam with terror, until he remembered that he was a Christian; he called on Jesus to help him, grasped his axe, and dashed towards the place from which the loudest sounds were coming. He heard the animals moving off all round him, but failed to see any of them.

Boqs have been heard as recently as 1924 according to popular belief. In January of that year a number of young Bella Coola were returning home in a motor-boat from Ocean Falls. They camped for the night on Burke Channel, and were alarmed to hear a crashing of bushes and a beating on tree-trunks. Thoroughly frightened, they directed the beams of several electric torches in the direction of the sounds without avail and at last started the engine of their motor-boat, the noise of which frightened the *boqs* away. 539 776*

An animal somewhat similar to the *boqs* is the *[illegible]*. The Bella Coola state that long, long ago, these lived as human beings near Port John on Evans Arm, King Island. They were a strange people, with peculiar rites including the worship of fire. Their neighbours, the Bella Bella, from whom they differed entirely, determined to destroy the *[illegible]*. A massacre took place, and only a few survivors escaped to an island in one of the lakes in the interior of King Island. There, in course of generations, they grew hairy and lost their human characteristics; it is said that a few paintings made by them are still visible there. Not many years ago some Bella Coola saw what may have been the last surviving *[illegible]*. Two hairy creatures were observed fishing from a skin boat on Burke Channel. As soon as they realized that they were observed they dashed ashore, broke up the framework of their canoe, and plunged into the forest carrying its skin covering. Nothing more seems to be known concerning them, nor do they appear ever to have granted supernatural assistance to anyone. 776* 824

Another supernatural creature is the *[illegible]*. It somewhat resembles a cow, although its legs are shorter and its body, which is white and hairless, is heavier. In spite of its awkward build, this animal can move so rapidly as to catch birds and animals with its tongue, which can be shot forth to a tremendous length. Various incidents are related concerning *[illegible]*. One of its characteristics is that it causes gales. The country where one lives is invariably denuded of underbrush and even pebbles; everything movable is blown away, leaving only trees 776* [824 776]

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* 776 [778] and gaping holes in the earth. In such regions no fire can be lit. The last known area of this kind is up the river behind Green Bay, about four miles from the sea. So far as could be learnt, [illegible] have never assisted Bella Coola in any way nor played any part in the social life of the community. They are feared on account of their supernatural power, but appear so seldom that they are practically disregarded.

More common than the last, and accordingly more important, is the *haohao*. It is an enormous bird with bony wings and long, flexible beak. As it flies, the wings rattle violently, and its note, an oft repeated "Hau, hau, hau," can be heard for miles. These birds are said to have been numerous in former [535] [573] years, and are well known to all Bella Coola. Masked figures representing them are often used at *kusiut* dances. The *haohao* is feared for its practice of inserting its long beak into the 761 rectum of anyone sleeping carelessly in the forest and drawing * 776 forth his entrails. This can be prevented by standing upright [784] a staff, such as all hunters carry, before going to sleep.

[534] A popular story states that once, not many years ago, a number of men camped at the edge of a canyon near their home, without taking this precaution. One of them was awakened by a slight movement of one of his companions and, looking up, he saw the long neck and beak of a *haohao* projecting over the rim of the canyon and seeking the person's entrails. The convulsive shiver of the stricken man had awakened him. With his bow he shot an arrow into the bird's neck, causing it to disappear over the brink. Presently the long beak reappeared and he discharged another arrow with the same result. Again and again this happened until the attack ceased at dawn. The hunter assumed that a single bird had been repeatedly attacking, but when he looked over the edge of the cliff, he saw below a number of carcasses, each with an arrow in its throat. The canyon must have been a roosting place for the birds. His companions seemed still asleep, but when he investigated he found that all were dead; only the slightly enlarged orifice showed how they had been killed.

* 776 No *haohao* has been seen within recent years, but one infor-
784 mant and her husband heard them on the north side of the Bella Coola River about two miles from the sea. They would have

been frightened at any time but nightfall increased their fears. Their dogs heard the sound and howled in dread. The woman threw on their fire several soiled blankets, her only pair of shoes, and some dry salmon, which all supernatural beings abhor. Then she and her husband fled home, waving lanterns to and fro and firing musket shots in all directions. The birds did not follow them, but they considered themselves fortunate to reach Bella Coola unmolested.

The beliefs of the Bella Coola concerning the supernatural animals just described are fairly exact; they know their appearance, what to expect, and what to do if one is encountered. In addition to these, they assume the existence of monsters of indefinite form which they term *[illegible]*. Any supernatural creature, a *[illegible]* for example, is spoken of as a *[illegible]* in general, not specific, classification. Consequently, what one Bella Coola may describe as a *[illegible]* is given a distinctive name by someone else with wider knowledge. So far as could be learnt, there is no designation other than *[illegible]* for creatures which move from the ocean in April to clear the way for salmon, and spend the summer in the lakes of the interior, or beneath the ice of glaciers. They can assume various forms, sometimes even human, though they usually appear as giant, hairless, bear-like creatures with short legs and brown skin. Their eyes are large, round, and glass-like. In whatever form these creatures may appear, they are almost certain to bring disaster to the beholder. One of the haunts of *[illegible]* is beneath the glacier on Mount [illegible], behind the small mountain which rises behind [illegible], on the south side of the Bella Coola River almost half a mile from the sea. It is said that only a few years ago a white man, having heard of these creatures, went to that place with a number of Bella Coola. All the latter were able to hear the roaring of the beasts, louder than the whistle of a steamer, but the white man seemed deaf to it, though the power of the *[illegible]* had affected him, for he died on the way back to the village.

Other *[illegible]* are said to live near Kimsquit. The father of

[illegible]

[illegible]

a woman now in middle age is said to have guided a white man to the spot. Through a telescope he saw an enormous animal, and passed the instrument to a Kimsquit Indian in the party. He, too, saw it, but the effect was so powerful that he soon died. Theoretically, a man may receive supernatural aid from one of these monsters, but practically they are regarded as entirely evil and to be avoided.

The creature to which the term [illegible] is most often applied is one that lives in lakes; it has a huge mouth and can suck with incredible force. More specifically, this animal is termed a [illegible]. One is said to have lived not long ago at [illegible] Bay, about six miles from Bella Coola, and a small one is said to be living even now in [illegible] Lake. The Bella Coola tell a number of stories concerning the [illegible]; the following is a typical account, and others will be given with folk-tales in a later chapter.

Within the life-time of an informant, two youths, a chief's son and a poor man's son, went to swim in one of the small lakes near [illegible] Lake. The chief's son who was ready first, swam out, [illegible] leaving his companion on the shore. When the latter was on the point of diving in he heard a dreadful sucking noise, combined with an ominous crackling. He called to the swimmer asking him if he, too, heard it.

"Yes," came the answer, "but it is nothing," and the youth continued his swim.

As the noise grew louder the boy on the bank cried out, "Come back, come back, there is something bad there that we do not understand."

His friend in the water again answered, "Oh! There is nothing wrong."

The noise increased, while the waves were rushing from the bank and then out towards the centre of the lake. The suction eventually grew so great that the youth on land was forced to clutch a tree with his arms, while his legs fluttered out towards the lake like pennants in a strong wind. The strain on his arms was so terrible that he was almost forced to relinquish his grip before the suction subsided. When he looked at the lake his companion had vanished.

The survivor returned to the village and reported what had happened. No one believed his story; instead, he was made a prisoner, accused of having killed the chief's son. For a week the people questioned him daily without being able to shake his story; then they resolved to

[illegible]

[illegible] 538 776*

[illegible] 776*

[illegible] [826]

[illegible] 539 776*

536 776 seized and carried to the shore. He had thought that it would be easy to free himself, but he found it impossible and was carried under the sea. He bit frantically at the enfolding arms, until he succeeded in freeing his own, with which he pushed up the beak of the octopus, thus killing it. He rose to the surface and returned home none the worse.

[825] The Bella Coola do not profess to know all the animals of the world; and if they see a strange one, they assume it to be one known to their ancestors though unfamiliar to them.
536 761 776 825 Since any unknown animal is considered to have supernatural powers, due care must be exercised when one is seen. The following incident illustrates this point.

The mother's brother of an informant worked for some thirty years for a white man in Victoria. His employer once sent him to see a turtle which was confined in a pool in a basement preparatory to being killed for a banquet. As soon as he saw it, he said:

"My parents in Bella Coola told me of such a creature."

A few days before Christmas the turtle was cut up and displayed on four platters in the window of the store; the Bella Coola saw it, and thus learned that it had been killed. The same night a sore appeared on his wrist, and by the next day it was large and running. He said to his employer:

"In a few days I will be dead. Do not grieve for me. The sight of such supernatural creatures is too powerful for Indians; I survived one experience, but twice has been too much for me and I will die."

His employer finally sent him to a white doctor who cured him, although the scar remained. Years later the man returned to Bella Coola where he displayed the mark as proof of his story. A few weeks later he died, and the Bella Coola are firmly convinced that his death was due to his having seen the turtle many years before.

776 777 [illegible] [777] Although the forests of British Columbia abound with supernatural animals of enormous power, the attitude of the Bella Coola hunter who penetrates into lonely places is not

Bella Coola hunter who penetrates into lonely places is not

one of constant fear. It is true that he may meet danger at any turn, but danger is part and parcel of human life, and he is by no means defenceless. He dreads the powers possessed by creatures of another place, but they for their part dread certain human objects. Clothing which has been worn for so long that it has become steeped with the emanations of its

I. McIlwraith E-3 (1922-1924)1948
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human scent belongs to a sphere differing from that of supernatural animals and is dangerous to them. Consequently, if worn clothing be thrown on a fire it repels unpleasant visitors. Other powerful protections are false hellebore, and smoked salmon roe. A wise hunter always carries them and if he sees a dangerous creature such as a *[illegible]* he chews the two together and spits them towards the peril. Needless to say, if a kindly animal is seen, the hunter does not drive it away by these methods. Why false hellebore should be so effective is a matter of wonder to the Bella Coola themselves, for as a rule it is the human essence attached to objects which gives them their strength over the supernatural. Thus the most powerful of all charms are pads that have been used by women during their menses. If a woman travels on the ocean she is careful to carry some of them with her ready to repel any danger from the supernatural water beings.[9] 776 * 789 [224] [224] [241]

The manner in which the Bella Coola regard mythical animals and other evidences of the supernatural is illustrated by the following practice. Hunters always want to know the direction of the wind, and when the breeze is too slight to be discernible they blow upwards a small amount of eagle down, which is so light that the faintest breath of air will bear it down wind. What the logical white man considers a natural phenomenon, appears to the Bella Coola as miraculous; eagle down, stripped from the dead bird by human hands and stored for some time within a house, has become so humanized that it can conquer supernatural powers to indicate the direction of the wind. 776 * 789 72.1 [224]

The mythical monsters already described are not the only animals regarded as supernatural by the Bella Coola. They believe that in the beginning *Alquntam* created man and beasts at the same time and in the same place, giving the former the greater share of power, but not exiling the latter to a different plane of existence. In those early days, the semi-supernatural 776 * 125 773

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[9] This matter will be described more fully in connection with Magic, see vol. I, chap. [illegible].

[illegible]

[illegible]

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[773] forefathers of the Bella Coola had the ability to talk with animals and birds. The men of today, who realize that such intercourse is not now possible, assume that they have degenerated from the golden age of their first ancestors. On the other hand, they see no reason to believe that beasts have undergone a similar change, and take it for granted that they have continued in the supernatural, or semi-supernatural state in which they were created by *Alquntam*. It is true that man is stronger than most animals, but that does not affect the attitude with which the latter are regarded, for supernatural and powerful are not synonymous terms. *Alquntam* decreed that they should serve as food for mankind, and they have since obeyed his command, but the Bella Coola do not consider themselves undisputed lords of creation. They fear *sniniq*, *sisiuł* and other creatures of great power, but they know how to avoid them; similarly, deer and mountain goats fear man, but they are not entirely defenceless, because their speed and agility give them advantages corresponding to those of man in combat with beasts stronger than themselves. All living creatures use the weapons with which they are equipped. For example, when a mountain goat eludes a hunter by scaling a precipice too steep for its pursuer, the latter considers it has escaped through supernatural climbing ability; whereas the goat has merely used the power granted by *Alquntam*. Like-
[774] wise, when a *sniniq* or a *sisiuł* is outwitted by the use of soiled clothing or smoked salmon roe, the means, unnatural to it, are natural to the human being employing them. Man and animals alike regard each other's weapons as supernatural.

In consequence of these beliefs, the attitude of the Bella Coola towards animals is fundamentally different from that of white men. They regard them as possessing human mentality, and even the ability to assume human form if they so desire. In fact, they believe that animals merely appear to them in the shape of beasts, but can change to human, or other form and behave accordingly whenever they wish to do
[754] so. The degeneration of mankind has made it impossible for

men to see these transformed beings habitually, but even now, 776
or at any rate until a few years ago, shamans were able to lift 825
the intervening veil. From accounts given by those who have [756]
had such experiences, the Bella Coola believe that *Alquntam* [773]
gave to birds and animals, as well as to humans, the boon of
fire, and it is only the unworthiness of men that makes them
unable to see the smoke rising from the houses of different creatures. In former times, fortunate hunters were able to do so, and consequently had phenomenal success. The smoke that ascends from the fires of different animals corresponds in colour to that of its owner; a mountain goat's is white, a beaver's, black, a squirrel's, red, a wolf's, grey, and so on. [823]
When a goat stamps the earth on a mountain, it rings hollow, as indeed it is to those animals, for their home is within; and when a hunter loses his quarry entirely, it is because the latter [756]
has entered its house. Shamans are sometimes able to hear the gatherings of animals under the peaks. Like human beings, they dance to the accompaniment of music, and in all respects behave like them. They have their times of joy and sorrow, of success and failure. When ill they are cured by their own shamans, grizzly bear, [illegible], and wolverine; these three also dance to welcome the dead. All animals and birds are like brothers, able to converse with each other and living harmoniously together in that other part of their life which only [224]
shamans have seen. Porcupine is the oldest, and a hunter always tries to kill one before passing to more important prey. [784]
The animals know about the actions of human beings and show their aversion to certain habits by refusing to allow themselves to be seen by anyone practising them. For example, [224]
they do not like people to drink water in which dog salmon have been soaked, and no hunter would dream of partaking of that food. [773]
Bella Coola mythology is full of accounts of human beings who, with supernatural aid, were able to penetrate to [538]
the homes of animals. Tales of this type would be unintelligible without understanding the attitude of the people to the animal and bird kingdoms.

8 776 825 845 Fish, too, are regarded in the same light. Indeed, there is a particularly close affinity between men and salmon, for twins are born through the instrumentality of the latter. Just how this occurs no Bella Coola knows, but a twin and salmon are regarded almost as brothers. In days when men were more powerful than now, a twin was especially liked by animals. Through his connection with salmon, a *ko'la* (the term applied to a twin associated with a salmon) could understand the speech of birds, animals, and fish. In many instances he could also assume salmon form at will.

9 776 781 825 In view of beliefs of this kind it is not surprising that the Bella Coola attribute great powers even to beasts well known to them. In the story recorded in vol. I, p. 55, the War-Party of the Tides was summoned by the speaking of a dog. A belief persists that danger is always present when a dog acts in an unusual way, though this can be avoided by killing it at once. In July, 1922, a visit was made to an elderly Bella Coola early one morning. The man was in a state of absolute terror. The preceding night he had locked his pet dog outside his house to give warning if anyone approached, but when he awoke in the morning, it was curled up asleep as usual at the foot of his bed. There was no possible hole through which it could have entered, so it seemed to the owner that his dog must have transformed itself into some minute animal and made its way beneath the door. The only other explanation was that its master, hearing in his sleep the whimpering of his pet, had got out of bed to let it in, without remembering that he had done so. To the writer this seemed the probable explanation, especially when the old man admitted that he had been in the habit of walking in his sleep in his younger days, but the Bella Coola was not satisfied. He could not decide whether or not to kill the dog, a great favourite, but finally decided not to do so. The incident was mentioned to another informant, who was greatly worried and assumed it to be an omen of death to the dog's master. His only comfort lay in the fact

that the animal had not spoken, a sure intimation of insanity 776* and death unless it is killed immediately. 787

A few years ago a dog gave warning to its master by placing 825 its paws on his shoulders as he sat on the ground, and howling over his head. Such unusual behaviour should have convinced him of the necessity of killing his pet to avert some calamity, but he paid no attention to it. A few days later, it seemed to him that he saw the face of a friend appear at an uncurtained upper window where no human being could be. The next morning he found an axe, which he had long lost and supposed stolen, imbedded far up in a tree near his house. These three [962] incidents all presaged disaster, and a few days later he shot and killed himself when crazed by drink.

The actions of wild animals are considered even more important. Not many years ago a famous Kimsquit hunter saw a bear and attempted to shoot it. He raised his musket and took careful aim, but was prevented from pulling the trigger. This should have warned him of the potency of the animal, and of the wisdom of avoiding the spot in future. The bear moved away without molesting him, but exactly one year later he was killed by a mountain goat at precisely the same place. No one knows which supernatural being had chosen to assume two forms in that locality.

The Bella Coola believe that animals, being supernatural, 776* have powers and abilities which they conceal from the white 825 man. Wolves do not kill their prey with their fangs, but with bird arrows which shamans alone can see; beaver do not cut with their teeth, but with crook-handled adzes. Even more striking is the virility of yearling mountain goats. An old Bella Coola described how he and another man were once hunting goats. His partner killed a fat yearling, which they laid on its back and skinned. The killer was about to dismember it, when the animal began to kick. First it shook one hind leg, then the other, then in succession each fore-leg, and lastly its head. Then the goat stood up and gave itself a shake, which caused the skin to return to its proper position,

* 776 and leaps away apparently uninjured. The Bella Coola say
825 that yearling goats have very strong spirits (I, p. [illegible]) which
[774] make possible such actions.

Though generally callous with regard to the sufferings of animals, the Bella Coola are usually careful not to kill more than they need; and knowledge of the supernatural power
[224] possessed by animals sometimes leads men to treat them with
[226] great consideration. For example, if a bull-head is caught in an olachen net in the river, the fisherman throws it back into the water, saying:

"I have saved you; please do the same for me."

The following incident, believed without question by the Bella Coola, shows the manner in which bull-heads help those who have often befriended them. About 1880 a Kimsquit fisherman, *[illegible]*, fell into a rapids where he was in great danger of drowning. A bull-head, seeing his plight and mindful of former help, increased his size and shoved *[illegible]* ashore with its nose.

"I have saved you, mortal," said the bull-head, as he did so.

The ability to increase in size is not restricted to fish, but is shared by small mammals and reptiles. Lizards, for instance, four feet in length, are said to live permanently in a pond about seven miles below Kimsquit; they are termed [illegible].

Toads, too, can aid mortals. If a man see a snake devouring one of them he will, if he is wise, kill the snake and say to the toad:

"Please help me when I am in difficulties."

A toad never forgets its obligations and if that man should fall into a river when the toad is near, the latter will grow large enough to drag him forth.

534 Snakes are regarded with aversion and disgust. This may
* 776 be in part due to the belief that they work for *[illegible]*
825 (I, p. 43), but more because these reptiles enter the stomachs
755 of human beings. The Bella Coola believe that snakes are the
[753] offspring of a supernatural Mother of Snakes, a mythical being of dread powers. The following story illustrates their beliefs

[illegible]

[illegible]

concerning the danger of some approach to this creature.

[illegible] was a man of mixed lineage, [illegible] and [illegible], near [illegible]. With several companions he was gathering berries when he stepped into a hole and felt numerous tiny creatures crawling over his legs. Looking down, he saw that they were small snakes, that had just been hatched from a [illegible] of snakes. He fled, terrified, pursued by the reptiles, which he managed to keep off to some extent by brushing behind him a branch of spiny swamp gooseberry, a known deterrent. When he had out-distanced the snakes he called his companions, told them of his adventure, and returned home. There he repeated the tale. Though *[illegible]* did not know it, some of the snakes had succeeded in entering his stomach. Presently he began to swell; his body became larger and larger until he was in danger of bursting. The reptiles within were breeding rapidly. Luckily, one of his fellow villagers knew the proper remedy. A raised bed was made for the sufferer about five feet from the ground where *[illegible]* stretched himself on a number of thorny branches, while his friends built a fire of devil's club and swamp gooseberry twigs so that he was fumigated by the smoke. Then, to give greater potency, they cast on the flames [illegible] clothing and [illegible] with menstrual blood, [illegible] finally a woman squatted [illegible] into a vessel some of her menstrual blood which *[illegible]* drank. This killed the snakes. The patient began to vomit, emitting a mass of wriggling serpents, and at once began to grow thinner, soon regaining his normal condition. Had he not been able to eject the reptiles, he would have died.

[illegible] was not the only one to have this unpleasant experience. Many others have suffered in the same way, but in no case has anyone been able to find the snakes at the actual place or time of entry.

The beliefs of the Bella Coola concerning the power possessed by animals are clearly shown by their attitude with regard to killing them. Man is immortal, so are animals. *[illegible]* decreed that beasts and birds should serve as food for mankind, but it is only their clothing, their mortal "blanket of flesh," as the Bella Coola express it, which they give to humans. In the autumn leaves appear to die, but every spring they are reborn. Similarly, when an animal is slain, it merely discards its visible self while its spirit[a] [illegible]

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[a] [illegible], see vol. I, p. [illegible].

THE BELLA COOLA INDIANS

to the land above whence, in course of time, it comes down to earth again to reanimate a new body.[1] Consequently, the success of a hunter does not indicate his prowess over an animal so much as the latter's good-will in allowing itself to be slain by one who has pleased him by ceremonial chastity (I, p. [illegible]), or by one who has been endowed with skill by some other supernatural being. Men are accordingly careful to obey the wishes of their quarry. Long ago, a mountain goat told a shaman that he and his friends liked [illegible], so a hunter who has killed one always smears two bands of [illegible] across his face from the right eye to the left side of the mouth. Another shaman was told by a bear never to use red-feathered arrows since [illegible] of his fellows killed with such would return. Plumes of other birds have since been used, preferably those of mallard ducks. Sometimes the wishes of an animal require considerable ritual. For example, when a bear is killed, the carcass is [illegible] upon neatly arranged evergreen boughs and skinned. The hunter arranges the pelt so that the tail lies over the neck, with the whole hanging loosely over the body. He pats it four times, as if pressing the skin back into place, and says:

"Please don't linger. Go home and return," or,

"Please come to me tomorrow. Tell your brothers, your sisters, your uncles, your aunts and your other relatives to come to me."

Should this be omitted, the animal is likely to stand up, [illegible], shake itself, causing the pelt to return to its place, and run away. Yearling mountain goats are especially prone to do this, as already mentioned. Even if an animal does not show its resentment by escaping in this way, it often refuses to return to earth unless the proper rites have been performed over its carcass.

Bears have another aversion: they do not like to be eaten by women. So the hunter leaves the skinned body [illegible]

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[1] [illegible] in Bella Coola as in every other community, [illegible] of his skill [illegible] to the [illegible] of animals.

[illegible] (1922-1924) 1948

[illegible]

Coola three pieces of it and eagle down on the water.

Before leaving the subject of supernatural animals, a word must be said concerning the attitude of the Bella Coola to them in those forms their first ancestors came to earth. If, for example, a man's first ancestor descended as a raven, this knowledge is a valuable possession of himself and his family. Indeed, the most treasured possessions of a Bella Coola are not the material objects collected by him through life, but the intangible rights wrapped up in his ancestral history. These are referred to under four names:

(1) Smaiusta, "Preserved Story": the myth describing the coming to earth of a man's first ancestors in the beginning of time.

(2) [illegible], "What Was Sent Down": the names and other possessions given by *Alquntam* to a man's first ancestors in the beginning of time.

(3) [illegible], "Whence We Came": the place to which a man's first ancestors came in the beginning of time, and the one from which they have since spread.

(4) *[illegible]*.

Various smaiusta are recorded in vol. I, chap. [illegible], and the second and third terms are really part of the first, although to the Bella Coola they are psychologically distinct. *[illegible]* is the word used for both the birds or animals chosen as cloaks by the first ancestors, and also for creatures with which the early people came in contact. The nearest interpretation appears to be, "Crest." When a Bella Coola whose first ancestor came to earth as a raven portrays that bird, it serves as a visible mark of his intangible possession. In former days, if a man carved on stone so that his work and his name would never be forgotten, it was a *[illegible]*, a constant reminder of his greatness to generations then unborn. A *[illegible]*, therefore, combines the concept of memorial with that of crest, so that Bella Coola speak of the white man's memorials as *[illegible]*. In brief, a man regards the form assumed by his ancestor when coming to this earth as an emblem of the

ancient history and fame of his family. It is a matter concerned 211
with the past, a matter of the mind, a source of pride 824
to him to have such a possession, but a matter that does not 779
affect his daily life.

So far as could be learnt, the Bella Coola crests consist of 825
the following birds and animals: raven, bald eagle, grizzly
bear, black bear, wolf, whale, blackfish, mosquito, loon,
[illegible], possibly deer, and the mythical double-headed snake, [776] *
sisiutl. To these must be added the sun, because some of the
original people came to earth in human form by sliding down
his eye-lashes, the sun-beams, and [illegible], the posts which [778]
stretched from earth to the land above, down which a number
of the first ancestors of mankind descended in human form.
The Bella Coola believe that these posts are particularly [834]
common memorials among the tribes of the north coast. According [776]
to some accounts it was these posts which supported
the first sky until it fell.

A crest is connected almost exclusively with the distant 824
past. A Bella Coola whose ancestor came to earth as a raven 779
pays no attention to the ravens of the present time. The 825
matter was approached from every possible angle and not the
slightest sign of respect toward living specimens of a man's
crest could be noticed. A query as to whether or not a man
refrained from eating his crest was regarded as highly humorous.
Nor is there any trace of fellowship between unrelated
families even if they happen to have the same crest. The
subject was broached repeatedly, until at last one informant
smiled broadly and said:

"I know now what you want to find out, I can tell you all about it."

He recounted how the Kitkatla are, in his opinion, stupid
enough to regard as brothers all those who have the same
animal crest even if they are members of different tribes. He [568]
said that when he was a young man at Victoria, where Indians
from all parts of the coast used to come, a Kitkatla had once
asked him what was his animal. He was puzzled, but as the

[illegible] answer to the question replied that his crest was the Raven. The [illegible] was a Raven man, too, and to the narrator's surprise, claimed him as a brother for the rest of his stay in Victoria. He shook with laughter as he recalled the experience, and added that though he was quite willing to accept favours of this kind he would never dream of returning them. It can be stated authoritatively that the Bella Coola have no totemic beliefs concerning their crests. There is not the slightest trace of respect towards the animal, nor yet of [illegible].

Although crests are not objects of religious veneration, yet they have some importance in the realm of social life. The possession of one serves to indicate ownership of an ancestral myth describing that particular bird or animal. A wealthy chief is proud to display his crest on a totem-pole, or as a painting on the front wall of his house. Everyone seeing such a design is impressed with the glories of the family history of the owner, to the latter's gratification. A living specimen of the bird or animal is treated with no respect, but its delineation is a reminder of family history. For that reason a man is often tattooed[illegible] with his crest, that derived from his father's line [illegible] on the right breast, that from his mother, on the left, and the corpse of a person often carries his crest on its face. After the death of a child a memorial-post is erected near his grave, decorated with a painting or carving of one or more crests to remind observers not only of the deceased, but of the family history, his most treasured possession. It is only half

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[illegible]

Raven, perhaps made conceited by this power, did not always use it for good purposes. He [illegible] many [illegible] which he taught to the Bella Coola, but sometimes he indulged in adventures of an obscene nature. In fact, he was often an "[illegible]." The Bella Coola relate many tales concerning his exploits. These are all mere stories, such as can be told by anyone, and they fall into two classes. One comprises humorous anecdotes, describing how Raven tried to show off, or outwit other birds and animals, and his consequent discomfiture. These belong to the realm of mythology and are recorded in vol. II, chap. [illegible]. In addition, there are stories describing the inventions and boons obtained by Raven; these are given in detail here as the only satisfactory means of illustrating the attitude of the Bella Coola towards Raven.

The Sea-Raven, to whom *Alquntam* granted such power, is not regarded as a bird, but essentially as a supernatural, with the usual characteristics of a human being and the weakness of a conceited individual who is always trying to display his prowess. The ordinary word for a raven is [illegible], but this Sea-Raven is properly referred to by his titles or [illegible], [illegible], "The Light-Bringer", [illegible], "The Wise One", [illegible], "The [illegible]", [illegible] "[illegible]", [illegible], and [illegible]. The Bella Coola do not explain what happened to this Sea-[illegible]; he appears to have dropped out of existence, and his power has not been transmitted to the descendants, the ravens of today. These are regarded as birds with but the slightest trace of their ancestor's greatness. The Bella Coola know of the [illegible] of the [illegible] concerning Raven, and say that in the north he is considered only a little less than the supreme deity himself. But to Bella Coola the exploits of Raven are always considered to be due to the power given him by *Alquntam*, whose assistant he was, although he delighted to show his own prowess by outwitting his [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Raven, blinded by his grief, did not believe him, and responded angrily: [illegible]

"No, you are not my son. Why do you lie to me? Go out of the house."

Disgusted at this reception, [illegible] departed. Just as he was passing through the doorway, Raven noticed the [illegible] marks on his legs, and realized that, in spite of the change in his appearance, the visitor was really his son. He called on him to return, but [illegible] paid no attention to his father's entreaties and [illegible]. Raven's grief was beyond expression, but he could do nothing to repair the damage he had done. If it had not been for Raven's mistake, all mortals would return to life four days after death.

The above myth is widely known among the Bella Coola, and is supposed to be historically accurate. At the same time, few people allow it to influence their thoughts with regard to death or its causes. It is a fact, but one that belongs to the realm of ancient history rather than to everyday experience. When a Bella Coola dies, his relatives, though they know that his death is due to the folly of Raven, tacitly overlook this, and do not feel bitterly towards Raven. Bella Coola beliefs and theology are not systematized, hence it is quite possible for a person to realize a certain fact, such as the cause of death, and yet disregard it entirely. Considering that absolute contradictions can be believed simultaneously, it is not difficult to picture the mental attitude of people who believe, and at the same time disregard their belief.

One of Raven's [illegible], and at the same time, beneficial exploits was the bringing of [illegible] salmon to the Bella Coola River.[a]

In the beginning of time, no [illegible] salmon inhabited the rivers, and Raven determined to supply them. First he tried making models [illegible] and throwing them into the water, but though he could animate them, they always died after jumping a few times. The reason for his failure, though he did not know it, was because he had omitted the small bones

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[a] This is an example of conflicting beliefs. In addition to [illegible] salmon [illegible] that Raven supplied them in the beginning of time, the Bella Coola also believe that they [illegible]

a friend. Raven determined to supply this want for the benefit of the Kimsquit people. Accordingly he used a natural stone depression near the village as his chamber-pot, and the liquid reflected forms clearly. Ever since, any liquid, especially urine, placed in that depression acts as a reflector. The place is called *Aalkwats*, "Where People Go," and it has been used as a mirror by the Kimsquit people and their guests for many generations. In this way, the renown of Raven spread to foreigners visiting Kimsquit. Another survival of this construction is the name *Nuqwalt'a*, "Chamber-Pot," commonly applied as a nickname to the small daughters of Kimsquit chiefs. 773 778 823 [561]

One of Raven's inventions was the making of nettle-fibre eulachon nets, an art which he taught spiders as well as men. In the beginning of time, Raven told two men to make a net according to a pattern which he showed them, and gave them some fibre. It was not sufficient, and when the workers asked for more, Raven told them to draw it from their own intestines. This they did, and ever since spiders have had the same ability. Another story describes how Raven saw an eulachon net being made in one of the distant villages which he visited during his travels, learnt the details of its manufacture, and taught the Bella Coola on his return home. 773 [287] [825]

Many of Raven's exploits are well known, although not embodied in elaborate myths. For example, it is believed that in the beginning of time the ocean was to the east of Bella Coola and the land to the west. Drownings were frequent, so Raven altered the relative positions of land and sea. Most ocean dwellers followed the sea to its new home, but a number of mussels remained near their human friends. They are still to be found in the upper valley of Bella Coola River. These shell-fish, which are probably fresh-water mussels, are said to be identical with those of the ocean, and are called by the same name. This is always mentioned as proof of the former presence of salt water in the upper Bella Coola valley. The occurrence of the shell-fish may be the origin of this theory. It might also be mentioned that the Bella Coola believe that a few years 773 823 [825]

773 ago the tide came farther up the rivers than at present and did
133 not recede so far. This statement was made by an intelligent old man who said that the change had taken place during his own life-time.

773 One of Raven's most important alterations to *Alquntäm's*
834 intentions was with regard to the sexual act.

> In the beginning of time, the organs of women were on the forehead, those of men on the palm of the hand, and intercourse was effected by a man rubbing his hand across a woman's brow. Raven found that children would not result from this practice and accordingly altered the organs of both sexes to their present positions. In order to teach mankind the sexual act he then chose a woman and held intercourse with her, telling her that if the practice were carried out secretly and vigorously a child would be born. Not nine months later the woman gave birth to an infant. Raven told the first inhabitants of the world that he wished them to have many; they consequently held intercourse frequently and begat many children until their descendants filled the Bella Coola valley.

The attitude of the Bella Coola towards this story is identical with their beliefs concerning Raven as the cause of death. "Yes," they say, as they repeat the above story in answer to a question, "Raven taught our ancestors how to have children."

773 One side of their nature implicitly believes any story handed
[779] down from the distant past, but few today are sufficiently naive actually to credit it. The more sophisticated frankly disbelieve, or pretend to do so. Doubt also exists with regard to
[197] Raven as originator of linguistic differences. The Bella Coola state that *Alquntäm* intended only one language for the whole world, but Raven thought that this would lead to trouble and used his power to teach the ancestors of every tribe their special speech.

Many inventions and beliefs are attributed to Raven without any accompanying myth. It is said that almost all geographical names are those bestowed by him on places reached
[103] in his travels. It was Raven who taught man how to bait
[226] hooks on long lines to catch black cod; it was Raven who first

instructed people about the significance of death omens; it 773
was Raven who showed them the use of slings; and it was [423]
Raven who constructed secluded caves and lodges to serve as [623]
meeting places for chiefs.

In brief, the Bella Coola regard Raven as an explorer, 773
teacher, and inventor, whose power, obtained from *Alquntam*,
enabled him to construct and correct his mistakes, but not to 776
create. Much of his work was for the good of mankind, but much was evil and malicious, an aspect which belongs to mythology. Essentially human, Raven could have been included among anthropomorphic, as well as among zoomorphic beings. He differs from most of the supernatural ones in [825]
belonging entirely to the past, as his descendants have none of the first Raven's power. It is doubtful whether he still exists, but in any case he has long since ceased to take any interest in the affairs of the Bella Coola, who consider him only as a figure of mythology and ancient history.

SUPERNATURAL BELIEFS OF THE VEGETABLE AND MINERAL KINGDOMS

Bella Coola beliefs concerning anthropomorphic and zoo- 776
morphic beings are relatively clear and exact; their appearance 824
is known, their powers and functions recognized. The supernatural attributes of trees and plants are less definite. *Alquntam* created the former in the beginning of time, and they were consequently able to talk and act like human beings at that distant period. Owing to the degeneration of man, mortals are no longer able to converse with trees, although the latter can still understand our remarks. In a vague way, the Bella Coola continue to think of trees as having human personalities, but so little is known of their powers, and they enter so seldom into contact or conflict with mortals, that they are practically ignored.

In an equally vague manner, Nature is regarded as a
Mother, giving birth to the trees and plants. One of the [535]
kusiut dances portrays this birth of the flowers every spring [575]
(II, p. 496).

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824 (II, p. 198). In this way the belief is kept before the eyes of the Bella Coola, but it is not a matter of prime importance in their lives. Rather contradictory is the concept that though each plant lack individual life, there is a supernatural mother of each species, corresponding in general terms to the Mother of Sockeye described in the last section. As one informant expressed it:

"If there is no mother, how can a plant grow?"

These mothers are assumed to live beneath the ground. Occasionally, one of them has been discovered. Not many years ago, a number of women were collecting bracken roots when one which had been gathered began to turn into a snake. The women were alarmed and puzzled at this strange phenomenon. As they stood watching, the ground in front of them fell away as if there had been an earthquake, and they realized that the snake-root had been the mother of the plant. Without further fear they cooked and ate it.

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823 Stones, too, and mountains were made by *Alquntäm*; consequently they have supernatural abilities and can understand the words and actions of mortals. When a wise man passes close beneath a precipitous mountain he always says to it:

"Please make yourself firm."

Most mountains, when requested politely, refrain from sliding and killing those passing beneath.

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823 In former days mountains in many cases rose to meet hunters, and sometimes turned completely over. The Bella Coola are not sure whether this was caused by the mountain itself, or by a *snanaq* within. Wise hunters carry ropes with them when they penetrate into deep valleys, and when they feel the first tipping of a mountain they leap for a convenient tree, grasp it with their legs, heads downwards, and tie themselves in that position. Slowly the mountain rises and turns over, but, if the ropes do not break, the hunters suffer no ill effects. After a varying interval the mountain returns to its normal position. This reversal can be hastened if a man bites

[114]

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his left cheek until the blood flows, takes also a mouthful of 776
his own urine, and spits out the mixture. 823

The following instance of this belief was recorded. [789]

> A Bella Coola chief and a number of followers were once at Kwatna [525]
> where they had been gambling for stakes of mountain goat grease. Two of the men had lost their supply, so they went into the mountains between Kwatna and Restoration Bay to replenish it. They saw two goats, killed them, and at once two more appeared in the same place; these they also slew. When a fifth and sixth goat appeared and were likewise dispatched, one of the hunters tried to restrain his comrade, saying that such phenomenal success must be due to supernatural power which they should not abuse. They stopped firing, cut the grease from their quarry, and started on the return journey. Presently the mountain began to tilt upwards before their feet. They had no ropes, and almost in despair concealed themselves in a small rock shelter. Their dogs too felt the movement and barked in terror. Fortunately, the mountain did not rise more than a few feet and soon subsided, so that the men escaped.

The attitude of the Bella Coola to supernatural powers of 776
all kinds may be termed a doctrine of Opportunism. Supernatural beings abound and constantly play a part in the affairs of mortals. An alert and bold man can take advantage of these opportunities and obtain assistance, but he who hesitates is indeed lost. Certain types of assistance are most commonly
granted to orphans and other unfortunates; accounts of these [736]
belong to the realm of mythology and will be described in a later chapter. On the whole the supernatural ones do not show discrimination in conferring boons, and the man who is quick to take advantage of them is the one to whom success comes.

SUPERNATURAL ELEMENTS IN HUMAN BEINGS

The Bella Coola believe that in the human body itself there 774
are certain supernatural elements. Neither sticks nor stones can move, because they lack these attributes possessed by men and animals. Considering the firm belief of the Bella Coola in the omnipresence of the supernatural, it is not surprising that they should ascribe the phenomena of health and sickness,

774 of thought, of success and failure and of life itself, to powers of another sphere. Their ideas are not clearly crystallised on this subject, but in the following section an attempt has been made to give a fair picture, gleaned from many informants, of the supernatural parts of the human body.

THE SPIRIT

The most important part of the human body is the *susmánods*, spirit. This is small, but of great power, since it belongs to the world of the supernatural; in fact, the spirit of a man is not mortal, but *siut*. Everyone, man or woman, rich or poor, chief or slave, has one; without it, life would be impossible. When a child is born, his parents supply him with food and care, and *Älquntäm* provides the even more necessary invisible elements, including the spirit. It resides in the back of the neck and resembles a thin bone shaped like a maple-leaf. Salmon have similar ones, but with them the bone is visible, [756] whereas only shamans can see it in human beings. The spirit in a new-born infant is weak and powerless, but it increases in strength with the body. If a man prospers in his ventures and has success in life, it is due, not to his own efforts, but to the activity of his spirit. When a man acquires wealth with little [556] labour, he knows that his spirit has been constantly trembling at the back of his neck; when he is unfortunate, that it has become inert or sluggish. [787] It is the cause of dreams, which are desired as means of foretelling the future. Some Bella Coola believe that in sleep it leaves the body and travels, unrestrained by any barrier, to the scene of the dreams; others, that it causes the images to appear. [828] During waking hours the spirit formulates every thought, no matter how trifling. When a man remembers that he left his fire with insufficient fuel and hurries home to rectify the omission, it is this element which has brought the need to his mind; when he thinks of a distant place, his spirit is responsible for the thought and some men even believe that it has travelled there. Sometimes an active one can give warning, as in the following instance. A few years ago a chief, when hunting, sat down to rest. While he sat a slide plunged down the mountain-side and swept away the ground where he would have been if he had not stopped. The Bella Coola know that such a fortunate escape is no accident, as foolish white men believe, but is the result of an active spirit. Sometimes it can convey only symbolic hints of what is to happen. An old Kimsquit man told how his lower eyelids once became sore and his stomach began to heave. This occurs with sobbing, so he knew that ill-fortune was before him and was not surprised at the death of his son. A thoughtful person pays great attention to indications such as these, knowing that his spirit is always striving to pierce the future and obtain information for him, however indefinite. The importance of the supernatural to the Bella Coola can be judged from the fact that they attribute every action and thought to an element of this nature. 774 [827] [787]

Mentality, *snk*, though caused by the spirit, is somewhat vaguely regarded as a separate entity. It comprises two parts, one constantly urging to good deeds, particularly to activity in ritual matters, the other to evil. No one knows the appearance, if any, of human mentality. Some of the thoughtful older men hazard the opinion that every tree has mentality, whereas others say that it has a spirit. In former times especially, as one was falling, the cutters could occasionally see a dark object somewhat resembling an otter flash away and disappear. Not until then was the tree actually dead. Even the old people do not profess to know anything definite about mentality, which is important only as an attribute of the spirit. In indefinite association with it, too, is breath, *sinints*, provided by *Alquntām* for everyone at birth. The word signifies more than the material act of breathing, it denotes the actual physical state of being alive, a condition "lent" by *Alquntām* to mortals. The connection of these two elements with the spirit is unequivocal, though their exact relationship is indefinite. 774 828 774 [761] [827]

If the spirit moves far from its proper position at the back of the neck, the owner falls ill; if it leaves him, his condition [753] [755]

774 becomes critical. Only a shaman (I, p. 550) can return one, and
755 if he fails death always results. In some cases a spirit leaves
[755] its owner without apparent reason; he becomes insane, tries to eat dirt, and his relatives realise at once what is the matter.
[756] They summon a shaman who takes off his cape, bunches it like a pouch on his stick, and points it in all directions as he sings his shaman's song. Finally he locates what is missing, and wraps it in his cloak, which he places around the sick man. This restores the element and the sufferer recovers immediately. Another method is for the shaman to press the back of the patient's neck, and by blowing and spitting cause the wandering spirit to return. Either cure must be performed by a shaman because of the supernatural power required.

774 Spirits can be extracted in various ways. Shamans can draw one forth by sucking at the back of the neck between their cupped hands; in former times, some were so powerful that they could extract them by their mere presence. During
774 *kusiut* dances (II, chap. i), the uninitiated are told that if they
575 enter the house where a ceremony is taking place, or even pass
[535] on the sidewalk outside the door, their spirits will be drawn from them by the power within and attracted to the dancer or to the sacred platform on which he is concealed. Many
[178] stories are told of this, which were firmly believed by the uninitiated until the last few years. Members of the society claim that their great power acts as a magnet to the spirits of all but their associates, except children in arms; the latter can be taken by their mothers into the house, because their supernatural elements have not developed sufficient strength to
774 leave their bodies. A person may also lose his spirit through a sudden shock. If two people meet unexpectedly in the forest and one of them shouts loudly at the other, even if only in fun, the spasmodic contraction of the muscles is enough to expel it.
[761] The person to whom this happens falls down as if dead, and
[756] though he soon recovers, his spirit has left him, and if it is not brought back by a shaman he dies a lingering death.

775 At death, the spirit permanently leaves the body. In some

seems to remain near the corpse for four days, so it may start as soon as its [illegible]. Distance means nothing to it, nor does time; once disembodied it goes back on the path of its late owner's ancestors from generation to generation, until it reaches the spot where his first forefather came to this earth. There it assumes the bird or animal form used on that occasion and goes up to *Nusmat·a*. It is uncertain whether or not the spirit can take on, simultaneously, the different shapes used by various ancestors of the deceased. Its existence in the land above is similar to that on earth, but in an advanced degree. A good carpenter, for example, is a better carpenter after death; a chief is a greater chief; and one of the explanations for death is that *Alquntam* has called a man to continue his work in another sphere. *Nusmat·a* is so large that it is never crowded, though the spirits are immortal. They can see what is taking place on earth and sometimes return in bird or animal form to visit and comfort their grieving relatives. Powerful chiefs delight to display this, by means of a masked figure, as the central feature of a potlatch. Apart from this ceremonial usage, disembodied spirits play no part in the lives of the Bella Coola. They take no interest in human beings and accordingly are neither supplicated nor feared. 995

THE LIFE

Closely associated with the spirit is the [illegible], life.* As in the previous case, *Alquntam* provides every human being and every animal with this at birth. It is an ethereal substance, having the form of the body which it animates; without it there can be neither strength nor growth; without life the body is an inert mass of flesh. As a person becomes older, so does this element grow, always taking the exact shape and form of the body. Alone, it can neither move nor think, its motive power being the spirit. It is the life that suffers 961 [994]

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*Interpretations have been employed wherever possible to lessen the use of confusing native terms. *Life* is not an accurate translation of the Bella Coola word, but it is hoped that the reader will grasp its real significance from the description in this section. [114]

It is the life that suffers,

whenever the skin is broken. Any wound may prove dangerous, but particularly one that cuts either of the invisible lines along which vitality flows from the little finger to the little toe. An injury to one of these channels spreads rapidly and is in many cases fatal.

It is generally considered that a person dies if his life leaves his body. In contradiction to this, though the discrepancy seems of slight importance to the Bella Coola, is the belief that it ascends at the winter solstice to the gathering of the supernatural beings in *Nusmat·a* to greet *Alquntam*. It is common knowledge that some part of the human body does this, but there is diversity of opinion regarding which it may be. Some say it is the spirit, but the consensus of opinion is that it is the life. If it is successful and receives presents in the land above, its owner will prosper on earth; if it is unfortunate, he will be the same; if it falls in the crush as the guests hurry forth to escape the [illegible] of *Alquntam*'s [illegible], he will die. By dreams a man learns the fortune of his supernatural representative, and from them he can judge what is in store for him during the coming year and receive intimations concerning birth and death, secret society matters and, in fact, every phase of human activity, since all are decided at the meeting of *Alquntam* and his associates. Dreams are considered to be especially important at this season of the year (I, p. [illegible]) and information obtained from them may, perhaps, be the origin of the present firm conviction that some portion of the body actually ascends. Bella Coola beliefs have so broken down in recent years that lack of unanimity concerning the specific part is not surprising, nor does it alter the importance of this conviction. No attempt is made to explain how an individual can remain alive during the annual absence of his life.

Although the life is so ethereal, it really consists of four intangible elements which unite to form the immaterial whole. One of these parts, including the voice, is located in the throat, another in the trunk, a third in the legs, and a fourth in the feet; the body is thus divided into four quarters. The conassociation of these with one another and with the spirit, the eventual disposal of the life, is a matter of advanced Bella Coola theology on which opinions differ. Only men of philosophical temperament even hazard an opinion on such matters, which are beyond the realm of daily routine. 761

When a man dies, his life leaves his body and the useless flesh begins to decay. At the same time the life is found to travel as an intangible wraith, having the form and appearance of its dead owner. It visits all the places where he had been in the habit of going during life, irrespective of their distance from the scene of death. Sometimes it journeys to the locality where, in a dream, the mother of the deceased received her first intimation of pregnancy (I, p. [illegible]). It wants to see former friends and sometimes makes its presence known to them by whistling. A person who hears this sound is saddened by the realization that one of his associates has passed away in some distant place. At other times, a man merely senses its presence and feels frightened without hearing or seeing anything to account for it. Very rarely, a dead person's life speaks to a dearly loved friend to inform him of his loss. During the existence of the body, spirit and life are closely associated, and the former sometimes accompanies the latter on its round of farewell visits before ascending to *Nusmat·a*. 761 775 [774]

After four days the life descends to the land below where it lives forever as a ghost. Some believe that it is the shadow which assumes this form, but the seeming contradiction is relatively unimportant since the life is essentially shadow-like. Ghosts have already been described in connection with supernatural beings, and further information will be found in vol. I, chap. VIII.

At death, when the life as a whole becomes a ghost, its constituent parts likewise undergo transformation. The one situated in the feet remains with the corpse and disintegrates; that located in the legs enters a wolf and nothing more is known of its fate; no one knows what happens to the one situated in the body. The part in the throat, including the voice, enters [827] [825] [539]

761 775 825 [534] [127] an owl, possibly one of those which normally roost on the tree behind Nusmät·a. This element of a dead person occasionally communicates with a living relative, as evidenced by the following story.

A number of years ago a party of men and women camped for the night beside one of the rivers flowing into South Bentinck Arm. After supper, as they were resting by their fire, an owl kept hooting from a neighbouring tree. One of the men turned to a friend who had been making obscene remarks and, half in jest, warned him to be careful in case one of his relatives was listening. The foolish fellow looked at the owl and asked:

"Are you a relative of mine?"

There was no answer, but when he had repeated the question four times, the owl spoke:

"I am so-and-so," he said, naming the deceased grandfather of his questioner.

Consequent upon the belief that the voice of a dead person enters an owl, the bird is treated with considerable respect. It is improper to make fun of one, or to ask who it was when alive. Should a person do so, the owl answers with the interrogator's own name and he soon dies.

761 On the whole, the life does not affect the daily existence of the Bella Coola as profoundly as does the spirit. When they stop to ponder on the reason for some event, they readily admit the importance of the life with its constituent elements, but they are not always considering its activities and seeking to strengthen it. It is essentially a religious attribute, of greater moment to a man of imaginative and suggestible temperament than to one who carries on the daily routine without asking *why* and *wherefore*.

THE TALLY POST

773 777 In the beginning of time, when *Alquntâm* sent the first people down to earth, he erected in *Nusmät·a* posts emblazoned with the bird or animal crest taken by each to serve as a memorial, or *reminder*, to him of the number of individuals existing

[illegible]. These are carved tally posts.* Each remained upright as long as the individual to whom it referred was alive, but fell at his death. Since that time, whenever *Alquntam* sends to a mortal *[illegible]*, the undefined power that causes life, his supernatural artisans erect in the land above a tally post for the new-born infant, marked with the bird or animal used by an ancestor. As long as this remains upright and straight, firmly fixed in the ground, its owner continues to be strong and prosperous, and has success in all his undertakings; if it becomes loose, or is crooked, he ceases to succeed. Prosperity does not depend upon the activities of an individual, but upon his supernatural possessions, spirit, tally post, and a third to be described later. If the tally post tilts far from the perpendicular, its owner becomes ill, and can be cured only by straightening it. In some cases *Alquntam* is kind enough to do this if placated by prayer and ceremonial chastity (I, p. 110), and in olden days, shamans were occasionally able to penetrate to the land above for this purpose. Even when a post was reached, they were sometimes unable to set it upright, though they could always estimate the length of a man's life from its angle of inclination. In one of the *kusiut* dances, the performer pretends to have the ability to go aloft and the uninitiated are deceived by the erection of a tall ladder up which he climbs and disappears (II, p. 200). On his return, he reports the condition of the tally posts of various people. This performance serves to remind both members of the society and uninitiated of the existence of these supernatural elements, and of the dependence of individuals on them for success in life. In spite of this ritual, actual knowledge of the powers and functions of tally posts has been derived only from the first Bella Coola who, created in the land above, were acquainted with the mysteries of life and transmitted such lore to their descendants. One old man expressed the opinion

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*[illegible]. One of the names of [illegible], [illegible], refers to them, meaning, "The Place of the Tally Posts." [illegible] and [illegible] are closely associated; sometimes the latter is pronounced [illegible], although this may be an error in recording.

[illegible]

[illegible]

772 that tally posts have mentality, and suggested that it might
777 be those which attend the gathering of the supernatural beings at the winter ceremonial instead of an element from the human body itself.

One elderly Bella Coola, of philosophical temperament, described *[illegible]* in terms far removed from the accounts of tally posts. According to him, every individual receives this supernatural possession at birth, and it remains with him, in close association with his body, throughout life. It stays in front of his face, invisible, yet having substance, and constantly shaking from side to side. [121] If a man fails to receive a present at a potlatch, it is because his *[illegible]* has ceased [125] to move. When stationary it is not transparent, and not only hides its owner from the donor's sight, but acts as a barrier to [756] his thoughts. The same man stated that this element can leave the body, can be seen by shamans, and that it is the one [775] which ascends at the winter ceremonial to *Nusmat·a*. At death it is believed to accompany the spirit and the life to the land above.

777 There seems no reason to doubt that the concept of tally
773 posts is an ancient belief. Nor does the application of the term *[illegible]* to another immaterial possession of quite
777 another type destroy this probability. It must be remembered that within the last eighty years the Bella Coola have suffered not only from the tremendous upheaval caused by the coming of the white man, but have been reduced to a mere fraction of their former numerical strength by various epidemics. These factors have led to the partial forgetting of ancient beliefs, with consequent confusion. It is probable that the use of the same term for the tally post, intimately connected with an individual's life although situated in the land above, and for an invisible and intangible possession which goes in front of him, is due to this recent decay of ancient convictions. If this be true, it merely means that in former times the Bella Coola had yet another supernatural element to govern and influence their lives.

THE WASH-BASIN

A third supernatural element which must be in good condition if a Bella Coola is to prosper in life, is a [illegible], wash-basin. In the land above, *Alquntam* has a large one filled with water which, having been constructed by himself, is replete with power. When a child is born, a small part of this receptacle, with its contents, is reserved for him; the supernatural artisans [illegible] the actual [illegible], but it is *Alquntam* who gives them the ability to do so. A fortunate man, whose ventures are successful and to whom goods are attracted, is said to have a good wash-basin; whereas the ill-luck of an unfortunate person is attributed, among other reasons, to the small size of his supernatural vessel. The Bella Coola have no clear ideas about the connection between an individual and his wash-basin. Some state that it remains in the land above; others believe that its intangible essence comes to a child at birth and grows up with him, always near his body, as if it were the offspring of the basin in the land above. So long as it remains in motion the owner continues in good health and prosperity, but if it becomes sluggish he falls ill. Long ago, shamans knew how to reanimate a wash-basin, but since the time of the first people, when supernatural ability was common, this has been a lost art. Senile decay is attributed to feebleness of this possession. 778 777 [154] [753] [776]

River water, being a creation of *Alquntam*, is akin to the water in his basin above. Boys are always advised to bathe in the river at dawn; the act is termed *[illegible]*, a word connected with *[illegible]*. A prayer is uttered while washing. The combination of verbal appeal and the application of water strengthens the petitioner's wash-basin and so increases his chances for prosperity. Until a few years ago, this practice was almost universal. Water is always considered a strange substance, obviously a supernatural creation, and believed to be the chief means of sustenance for a child after being weaned.* 774 777 823 575 762 171 862

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*This may be a mere rationalization.

Shamans achieve much of their success through their ability to get their wash-basins, both tangible (I, p. 560) and immaterial, in tune with *Alquntäm*'s in the land above. One method of curing a patient is by washing, with the idea that the water and vessel used have potency through association with those in the upper world. It is believed that in the distant past, shamans were even able to carry their patients to the land above and wash them in *Alquntäm*'s own basin. Such feats are perpetuated in certain shamans' names, such as *Älqälqo-[illegible]*.

It may be said in conclusion that although the Bella Coola have indefinite ideas concerning the exact form and functions of this last element, there is a firm belief that an individual's success in life depends upon the activity of spirit, tally post, and wash-basin. With regard to supernatural elements as a whole, it is clear that in spite of somewhat conflicting beliefs concerning the precise functions of each, they play an important part in the life of every Bella Coola.

MEANS OF PROPITIATION

Some of the methods employed by the Bella Coola to gain the favour of the supernatural have already been mentioned, but the subject is sufficiently important to warrant a separate section. In view of the omnipresence of supernatural beings and powers, and their influence on the lives of mortals, it is not surprising that the propitiation of them is a vital factor in human life. The chief means are prayer, sacrifice, and the observance of ceremonial chastity.

PRAYER

Prayers are regularly addressed to *Alquntäm* who, in this connection, is known as *Minakais* or *Täta*, both meaning "Father." A wise man or woman desiring success in hunting, in love affairs, in the acquisition of wealth, or in any activity whatsoever, is accustomed to ask *Minakais* to grant his desire. No ritual is required. The petitioner merely seeks a lonely place where he is not likely to be disturbed, and addresses the supreme god in a loud tone of voice, requesting his assistance. [782]

Although prayers can be said at any time of the day, or at any season of the year, there are occasions when they are more potent than at other times. At dawn, for example, a wise young man is accustomed to go down to the river to wash and pray. He enters the icy water, blows water over his hands, and rubs his body vigorously[illegible] either with a smooth pebble, or, if it can be obtained, with a stone taken from the stomach of a sea-lion.[illegible] As he scours himself, he asks *Menakais* to grant him long life, power, success, and strength. On coming from the water, he repeats his request, and then washes himself again. This process is repeated four times, making eight prayers in all. A young man who does this habitually, and in other ways pleases the supreme deity, is likely to have success, and may even be given supernatural assistance by one of the many anthropomorphic or zoomorphic creatures. The underlying belief is that *Alquntam* actually hears the words spoken and, pleased thereby, aids the petitioner either directly, or by strengthening the supernatural elements in his body. [783]

Menakais has power over both rain and dry weather, and is petitioned for whichever is desired. When the sun is obscured by rain clouds, the Bella Coola pray: [821]

"Please clean your face, *Menakais*," or,

"Please show us your face, we need you."

Before a man starts on a journey, either by canoe or on foot, he always asks help for his undertaking. [484]

"*Menakais*," he prays, "Be with me," or "Go before me," or, "Give me what I want."

Corresponding to the importance of the occasion, prayers are always made before the departure of a hunting or war [224] [726] [785] [515] [296] [823] [825]

[illegible] Urine was formerly used for washing both the body and clothing. It was followed by the application of clean water, and undoubtedly had a religious significance. Indeed, washing purely for cleanliness was not habitual until recently.

[illegible] The Bella Coola state that stones are often found in the stomachs of sea-lions. One specimen, considered of great value, was seen; it was indistinguishable from a water-smoothed river pebble.

782 224 [illegible] 776 [785] party. Canoes always start soon after dawn, and each member of the expedition is careful to pray before leaving, and also to avoid eating in case food should in any way interfere with the success of the venture. Before reaching their destination, a chief in each canoe draws from a pouch some eagle down brought for the purpose, holds it before his mouth, and blows a little towards each of the four cardinal points, at the same time asking *Menakais* to smile on the enterprise and grant a safe return. This does not guarantee success, but it is felt that any disaster which may occur would have been more serious if assistance had not been thus requested.

782 776 Although *Alquntam*, under the name of *Menakais*, is the one to whom prayers are most often addressed, petitions are sometimes made to other beings. In the beginning of time, when Raven had superabundant power, mortals frequently sought his assistance. At the present time, he is sometimes asked for aid, in the belief that he may still have some shreds of his former power, or be in a better position than man to intercede with *Menakais*. If ravens croak when it is raining, 782 776 825 821 people may ask them to request the supreme being to stop the rain; in such cases, a petitioner is careful to address a raven as *Nemaxila*, his title as chief, rather than as Raven. In cold winter weather, a raven is sometimes caught alive, its head smeared with grease, and as it is released, the captor says:

"Please end the cold wind, *Nemaxila*."

782 [291] Prayers are also said half humorously, half seriously, on many occasions. When, for example, clothing has become too ragged for further use, it is thrown on a fire with the remark:

"Please come to me again, now."

The thrower does not actually believe that in so doing he is asking help from his clothing, but it gives him a certain sense of satisfaction thus to have expressed his desires.

782 424 821 The prayers above described can be said by anyone, at any time; they are means of propitiation known to the whole community. In addition, information was obtained about two prayers, each of which is the jealously guarded prerogative

of a single family. Either is considered an almost certain means of stopping rain, but no one, even though aware of the method, can practise it with success unless he is a member of the family to which the method belongs. [illegible]

One of these prayers, the property of a [illegible] family, is addressed to *[illegible]*. If the petitioner wishes to stop heavy rain, he goes to a quiet place in the woods and calls in a loud voice:

*[illegible]** [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
That, [illegible], upon the bottom of your heaven
[illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
so that may look down the cherished one your child.

That is, "Expose the upper heaven so that your cherished child may look down."

It will be remembered that *[illegible]* is the being who takes care of *[illegible]* in the upper skyland. It is said that this prayer was learnt by the ancestors of an informant in the beginning of time and that a repetition of the exact words is enough to drive away the rain clouds between earth and the upper heaven. For many generations care was taken to teach some intelligent member of the family the correct formula, and the person so instructed was expected to use his knowledge for the benefit of any of his relatives desiring fine weather. [774]

Another prayer prerogative of similar type was recorded from an old man who related what he had seen his grandfather do many years before. The two were once hunting when heavy rain threatened their success and drove them to the shelter of a projecting ledge. The grandfather, not having any cedar-bark with him, cut and dried some evergreen boughs which he gave to his grandson, telling him to light them and wave them over his, the grandfather's, head. When this had been done, the old man rushed out into the rain and in a loud voice asked some supernatural being, whose name was forgotten, to throw his eyes upon the rain clouds in order to dispel them. That night the petitioner neither drank water nor urinated, and the [illegible] [785]

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*The vocative form.

[782] sure that the reaction was fine. This particular method of praying had been learnt by one of his ancestors in the beginning of time, and was afterwards transmitted in his family. With the coming of the white man and consequent decay of customs, it has not been exercised since the death of the grandfather of the man from whom the information was obtained.

SACRIFICE

782 It might be expected that a clear division should be made between the subjects of prayer and sacrifice, but in practice they merge into one another. A mountain goat hunter, when camped near a glacier which he knows to be the haunt of some dreaded supernatural being, asks help from him. He takes [824] dyed and undyed cedar-bark decorations to make his request more ostentatious, and after the prayer throws them into the fire, saying:

"Please accept them, supernatural one," thus making an offering to supplement his verbal petition.

If he is even more cautious, or eager not to offend any [824 825 826] supernatural being in the vicinity, he throws on the fire tufts of cedar-bark, eagle down, and scraps of food as well. Whether or not the objects thus destroyed by the flames reach the being to whom the request has been made, is a matter upon which the Bella Coola do not theorize; but the generosity and self-denial of the donor is appreciated, and a favour is often granted in return. A man who frequently hears in his dreams the voice of some supernatural being, knows that it is taking an interest in his doings and endeavours to propitiate it, by placing on a fire tidbits of any food he has obtained, saying at the same time:

"*Wai, wai, wai,*" "More, more, more," that is, "May I receive more of the same."

A foolish person fails to show his appreciation of favours received, but a wise man never forgets to do so.

[502 133 756] Likewise a person is careful to propitiate supernatural powers when in peril. Both at Kwatna and at Mesatche Nose,

the point between Labouchere Channel and Burke [illegible], 782
there is danger from treacherous currents, so, when a shaman [193]
passes either of these places, he lays some food on the water [508]
and puffs eagle down into the air as he asks for help. If no
shaman is in the canoe, this is done by the captain. [756]

The being to whom offerings are most commonly made is
[illegible], the supernatural woman who cures the sick and [776]
gives power to shamans. Whenever a hunter kills an edible
animal in the forest, he cuts off four pieces of flesh and throws [224]
them into his fire to gain her goodwill. Long, long ago,
[illegible] appeared to a hunter, seized some of his game, [779]
and told him of her wishes with regard to presents; these have since been obeyed by wise people. Similarly, the relatives of a man absent in the mountains or at sea throw scraps of food on the fire and ask the protection of *[illegible]* for the one in danger. In this case, it is clear that objects thrown into flames are received and appreciated by *[illegible]*.

Alquntam, although usually propitiated by prayer, is also
given presents. Frequently, when a man is praying, he accom- [776]
panies his words by blowing up into the air small particles of eagle down. Prayers in connection with the departure of war
or hunting expeditions have already been mentioned, but
before starting on any journey by canoe, the captain is careful [484]
to pray and to throw upon the water four pieces of red, and [824]
four of yellow cedar-bark. The blowing upwards of eagle [825]
down is a common accompaniment to all kinds of prayers, but, if none is available, cedar-bark can be used equally satisfactorily. If possible, this is cast on the surface of water, otherwise into a fire, as a request is being made. The Bella Coola do not believe that such presents are actually used and considered valuable by *Alquntam*, but they emphasize and accompany the vocal prayer, and demonstrate the petitioner's sincerity.

Ghosts, on the other hand, depend almost entirely on pre- 775
sents given them by mortals, since food is not abundant in the 782
land below. The relatives of a dead person always throw

775 782 small particles of food on a fire; these become large when they reach the land below and nourish the ghosts. An individual making an offering of this kind says:

"*Anakaliimai kadan*," "This is to make straight your road, beloved one."

[756] The needs and desires of ghosts have been made known to mortals through visits paid by shamans to the land below, and by the coming of ghosts to this world. It is, therefore, [972] realized that food placed on the ground does not reach the land below, but that morsels thrown on a fire sink through into the abode of ghosts. Offerings to the dead are not made [753] with the hope of receiving favours from them, but rather to provide beloved relatives with necessary food and to prevent them from showing displeasure by causing stomach-aches and other ailments.

782 Other instances, both of prayer and of sacrifice, will be recorded in connection with various myths. The salient feature is that the Bella Coola are able to gain, by such means, the favour of supernatural beings, a factor which plays an important part in their daily life. In addition, they have a [789] large number of practices based on sympathetic magic. No absolutely rigid boundary line can be drawn between the latter and religion proper, but there is a fairly clear division between rites such as those just described, in which propitiation is the important element, and others in which the desired end follows the mere performance of a certain act. Customs of this last type will be reserved for later consideration (vol. I, chap. XI).

THE OBSERVANCE OF CEREMONIAL CHASTITY

831 785 In addition to prayer and sacrifice, the Bella Coola have yet another means of obtaining the goodwill of supernatural beings, and at the same time of strengthening their own supernatural attributes so that good fortune is likely to occur. This is by the practice of *sustsia*, ceremonial chastity, of which the basis is that a man must not hold intercourse except after certain periods of continence. To understand this, it is neces-

sary to understand the attitude of the Bella Coola to the sexual act itself. Although it is a normal part of life (for no one would voluntarily abstain from all contact) yet the union of man and woman does not lack import, since its very humanness distinguishes those who practise it in the eyes of supernatural beings, both anthropomorphic and zoomorphic. Those who indulge excessively become so over-charged with this characteristic that their undertakings are certain to fail, whereas those who remain continent for a considerable period are so freed from the contagion of mankind that they become almost supernatural themselves and always succeed in their ventures. If, after a period of restraint, a man holds intercourse, this essentially human act adds typical human strength to that accumulated by chastity. Chastity alone gives power, but chastity consummated by intercourse at the proper period increases that power enormously. This somewhat complicated belief is accepted without question by every Bella Coola, playing an important part in their lives, even in their present degraded condition. The following story illustrates the point rather clearly:

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[184]
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A party of Kingcome Inlet people had been present at a ceremonial at Smith Inlet. While returning home, one canoe, containing a chief, his wife, and eighteen or twenty commoners, was caught by an unexpected south wind and driven on the rocky islet, *[illegible]*, where the lighthouse now stands. The occupants managed to reach shore and to save their canoe. The islet was barren, but they made a rude shelter of boughs in which they lived while the storm continued. Every day the chief sent out the young men to hunt seals, and every day they returned empty-handed. The little food they had with them on landing was now exhausted and they were starving. One night, when they were almost famished, the chief said to his wife:

"The youths have done their best. Now that death is before us I want to create a kindly feeling. I am going out, probably to die during the night, and I want you to allow each young man to sleep with you. It is a strange request but our condition is unusual, and the story of your shame will never be known, because we shall soon all be dead."

[837]

The wife acquiesced. The chief then told one of the young commoners to lie with her, and afterwards to tell a comrade to do likewise,

539 who, in turn, would pass on the request so that it might reach each
831 member of the party. Not only is it contrary to custom for a commoner
785 to hold intercourse with a chief's wife, but it is unknown for a man to
ask another to sleep with his wife, so the youth was surprised and rather
[837] frightened. However, he acceded to the request, passed on the instructions, and washed. As he was bathing, a seal appeared in the surf beside
[622] him, and he was able to kill it easily. Each in turn behaved in the same
manner, washed, and then killed a seal. Next morning, when the chief
returned he was delighted that all had turned out in accordance with his
hopes. At the same time the wind dropped so that the party was able
to return home.

The power which had brought the seals within reach of the
831 men had been engendered in their own bodies by these ritual
785 acts after a rather lengthy period of continence. The Bella
Coola believe that such a procedure always increases their
strength and ability, therefore giving them a better chance to
gain favour from supernatural beings, and to take advantage
of opportunities offered. Hunters in particular are careful with
[224] regard to their marital life since animals know their acts and
[825] thoughts, and hide from one who has not made himself "clean"
[789] by continence, its termination, and bathing. *Seatsta* consists
of these three elements, but since continence is the most prominent feature, the term may be translated as "ceremonial
chastity."

In its simplest form this comprises merely the three elements already mentioned. The longer the continence, the
greater the power engendered by its termination. A man who
has practised abstinence for a year has such strength within
himself that almost any good fortune may occur, and cases
are known in which it has been carried out for even longer
periods. More often, an individual practises ceremonial chas-
[184] tity in accordance with a family tradition. One old man gave
the following recipe and was most emphatic that it always
224 brought success in hunting and fishing; he added that on the
785 two occasions he had tried it, he had brought back a phenomenal number of skins.

A person planning to set out on an expedition for any pur-

pose should remain continent for several nights to increase his 224
generative powers. He then selects a time for beginning the 785
rite and on the second and fourth nights from that date sleeps with his wife, holding intercourse repeatedly and vigorously until he is utterly exhausted. Before dawn on the third and fifth days he must wash in the river or in some quiet stream. Then follow four nights of restraint, a further intercourse, and washing before dawn. The period is next increased to eight nights, then twelve, and finally sixteen, each with a similar contact and bathing. The nights of abstinence are thus forty [801]
in all, a lucky number. An unmarried man can obtain power [836]
in the same manner with the assistance of a female friend; it is the act itself that is vital, not the union of husband and wife.

At the present time, only two Bella Coola are said to know [184]
this particular type of ceremonial chastity, which they conceal carefully, even refusing offers to buy their knowledge. It is potent at any time, but especially if the periods of continence have been so arranged that they terminate at one of the solstices. Then, indeed, can a hunter set off with every prospect [825]
of success, knowing that the human taint disliked by animals [789]
has been removed, and been replaced by a ceremonial cleanliness pleasing to them. If the time terminates at the winter solstice, the hunter should set out immediately; if it ends in June, he must remain away from women after his final intercourse. In September or October, when ready to leave for the hunt, he must sleep beside his wife for the last four nights; each night he must place his leg between hers, and each morning the two must wash together. The best fortune of all is obtained by a man who observes this forty-eight period for four successive years.

Another, and more common, count[illegible] is to observe continence for four nights, followed by intercourse. Immediately [824]
afterwards, the man should eat as much devil's club[illegible] as pos- [278]

[illegible] The record of nights is kept by notches cut in a stick or by knots on a cord. [211]

[illegible] Or false hellebore. This latter plant is thought to be so poisonous that the eating of even a twig an inch in length is fatal; a very small amount, however, all that is ever taken, acts as a powerful emetic.

224 sible, selecting small twigs from which the bark and spines
785 have been rubbed off. This acts as an emetic, so that before
washing in the morning he has vomited from his stomach all
[824] polluting matter, especially any human hair which animals
[278] consider particularly unclean. Before dawn he goes to the
[789] river and remains beneath the surface as long as possible, irrespective
of the coldness of the water. Then he returns slowly
to his house. Four nights later the same acts are repeated.
These eight nights of continence are followed by two further
periods, each of four nights, making a total of sixteen. Thus
fortified, a hunter anticipates great success.

985 A person practising ceremonial chastity is in a condition
peculiarly susceptible to disaster, and must observe certain
restrictions. If, for example, anyone sees him as he returns from
washing in the morning, the power which he has been accumulating
so laboriously is lost. Owing to this belief, it is customary
for a man to wash long before dawn and to come creeping into
his house through a hole in the floor. He must always be the
last to retire at night, the first to rise in the morning; and he
must say nothing about what he is doing. Intercourse is, of
course, absolutely forbidden except on the proper nights, and
at other times he must not even put his arm around his wife.
Failure to obey these restrictions destroys any advantage from
[887] ceremonial chastity, while actual disaster follows should a man's
wife misconduct herself with anyone else when he is using her
for this purpose. If she is unfaithful, her husband is certain
to be slain by an animal when hunting, or to slip and be killed
on a mountain trail. Animals know all that human beings do
[885] or think, and they punish anyone who is unable to perform
ceremonial chastity fittingly. Behind these restrictions there
841 is undoubtedly the sentiment that intercourse, held daily and
785 properly at the right time, is not a mere desire of the flesh, but
a ceremonial act. Indeed, when the Bella Coola speak of it in
[833] connection with ceremonial chastity, they do not use the
[195] common term, *e·m*, which has a coarse implication, but *nulj'at*
which has a polite and almost sacred implication.

Ceremonial chastity is considered almost a necessity to 831
hunters, and in former years a man would rarely, if ever, set 785
out to seek game without fortifying himself by at least several
days of continence followed by washing. In the few cases [224
known of a female assuming the clothing and activities of a 783
male, she has been forced to hire a man to sleep with her on 838]
the proper nights before starting to hunt. But hunters are by
no means the only ones to observe ceremonial chastity. If a
man wants to build a salmon-weir, it is by this means that he
makes himself strong enough to succeed; if he plays cards, [525]
good fortune is sought in the same fashion. The guests at a
potlatch observe ceremonial chastity so that their host may [431]
not forget them in his distribution of presents, the host, that his
guests may arrive on time. The *kusiut* dancer thus fortifies [575
himself for the performance of a dangerous ritual. In this way 535
a man experiences dreams foretelling the future. In every 787]
desire or activity of life, ceremonial chastity is a potent means
of success, not infallible, usually combined with prayer and in
many cases with sacrifice, but a background and accompaniment
to every means of propitiation. If a man has conspicuous [777]
ill-luck, it is because he has failed to observe ceremonial
chastity; if he succeeds, it is because he has done so. At the
present time there is living in the Bella Coola valley an old
white man who for years has ranged the mountains in search
of gold; he has been unsuccessful, and the Bella Coola believe
that he will never succeed until he observes ceremonial chastity.

The strength which a man may acquire through the practice
of this rite is almost limitless. A man may be ailing on [753
account of the leaning of his tally post, but, if he energetically 777
and faithfully observes chastity, it will become straightened,
whether automatically or through the agency of *Alquntäm* is 755]
uncertain. After the termination of a long period of continence,
a man's spirit is so strong that his friends place their [774]
hands on the back of his neck in order to absorb some of the
power radiating from his spirit. Ancient myths record how [773]
the mere force engendered in a man's body by lengthy abstin-

591 785 [773] [784] ence was enough to kill an enemy, as if his spirit had been driven from his body by a sudden start. Even in recent times it is said that individuals who have observed ceremonial chastity have been able to perform miraculous feats. A few years ago a Bella Bella man lost two sons and was trying to get enough money to buy a tombstone for them. With this in view, he observed chastity for almost a year. Then he went seal hunting, and had killed a large number of the animals when, standing up in his boat, the sail blew against him so that he was thrown overboard. But he was so strong that he simply walked on the surface of the water and re-entered his boat, none the worse for his mishap. [779] The men who cited this instance stated that a number of Bella Bella had seen the occurrence and could vouch for it.

[124] Ceremonial chastity is not a matter about which the Bella Coola are willing to talk. It concerns both their religious and family life, in neither of which are strangers welcome. But when an investigator becomes on friendly terms, and gains some understanding of the inner lives of the people, he begins to realize its importance. [789] Ceremonial chastity is not only potent in itself, but it is also the favourite means by which a man can cleanse himself of the impurities of human existence so that he finds favour with the supernatural.

CHAPTER III

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Ancestral Family—The Village Community—The Family—Kinship Terms—Slaves

As in other communities, the social, religious, and economic aspects of Bella Coola life are interdependent, but there is an added complexity in the influence of mythological concepts. This not only complicates investigation in the field, but it also renders a logical description of their customs difficult. Some reference to practices recorded in detail in later chapters is unavoidable. 128 182

In many communities, ethnologists have been able to begin with the social organization of the people. Among the Bella Coola, this is impossible, since their religious beliefs colour every aspect of their life, and these must be understood by anyone who wishes to comprehend their culture as a whole. In this chapter, too, it is necessary to commence with a description of that aspect of mythology which serves as the cohesive bond to one of the social units, the ancestral family.

Ancestral Family

As recorded in the last chapter, it is believed that in the beginning of time *Ålquntäm* caused the first men and women to be created in his house above and sent them down to populate the earth. They came in groups of two, three, four, or more, brothers and sisters, or more rarely man and wife, to different parts of the Bella Coola valley. They brought with them tools, houses, clothing, even sustenance in the shape of fish and animals. More important, from the point of view of social organization, they brought with them names and ceremonial prerogatives. In fact, the Bella Coola believe that their culture was created by *Ålquntäm* in the distant past, and has not been the result of slow growth. It is true that there 773 [829]

773 have been many changes. Raven, the culture hero, taught
829 the early settlers many useful arts, and they were themselves
so powerful that they were able to create ceremonial and other
prerogatives in a manner impossible to their descendants.
Moreover, the people realize that they have been influenced
by neighbouring tribes since that time, but in spite of these
additions, they believe that their life is patterned on that of
their earliest forbears.

[181] As a group, the Bella Coola are philosophers. They demand
a reason for everything, though once a reason has been given,
and accepted, they think no more about the matter. The
elaboration of Bella Coola mythology may be due in part to
their desire to explain their social organization; but without
question these myths, now accepted as facts, have had a great
influence on the lives of the people. In fact the social structure
of the tribe has tended to conform to the myths.

621 It is believed that each group of first people formed a village
773 community, and pre-empted hunting-grounds in the vicinity.
These usually consisted of small valleys opening from the main
[361] Bella Coola River, tracts which could thus be easily defined.
[226] Each group also took possession of a suitable part of the river
for a salmon-weir, or, if located on the coast, a convenient place
for an ocean fish-trap. In course of time the first people married,
of necessity with members of other villages. According
[591] to mythology, and equally according to modern practice, the
women usually moved to the villages of their husbands. When
773 a child was born, it naturally grew up to share in the hunting-grounds
of its father's village. Moreover, the father was able
to bestow on his child various ceremonial dances; the concepts
of some he had brought with him from above, others he had
formulated on this earth. It is assumed that all the first people
were mighty chiefs, able to initiate rites in a way that few
modern men have been able to equal. But the mothers of
these children, the first born on this earth, did not surrender
the privileges of their own villages at marriage. Consequently,
their children were of almost as much interest to the brothers

and other relatives of their mothers as to their fathers. It 773 was taken as a matter of course that a child had full rights in the village of his mother, and from her, as from her relatives, he likewise received various prerogatives. Thus each child was a member of a bilateral social group. From actual residence in his father's village he tended to be more intimately associated with him and his brothers than with his mother's relatives, but this did not prevent him from visiting at the home of the latter, where he was received as a member of that village. Through the bestowal of prerogatives by his mother and the members of her family, his relationship with them was further emphasized. Such a child was, in fact, a full member of two groups.

When the members of the second generation married and begot children, each of these could have been a member of four groups; that of his father's father, father's mother, mother's father, and mother's mother. The Bella Coola believe that there were approximately forty-five groups of first settlers, corresponding to the forty-five towns, and it is obvious that if the system of intermarriage had continued for a few generations, a man would have been a member of each of these first groups. They assume that their first ancestors came to this earth far more than a few generations ago, and yet at the [614] present time no one claims to be a descendant of more than eight of these first groups, and most claim descent from only two or three. In part this can be explained by forgetfulness, [611] though a Bella Coola would regard this statement as heresy. The residence of a man in the village of his father has tended to emphasize relationship with the ancestral group that first populated that village, and there is no doubt that actual relationship, through the mother, with the members of other groups must in many cases have been forgotten in the course of generations. The term *ancestral family*, *minmints*, is used [614] in this monograph to designate those individuals who believe [104] themselves to be descended from one of the first groups that populated this earth.

614 773 A man may claim descent from as many as eight of these groups, that is, he may be a member of eight ancestral families. Some restrictive means must have been employed to limit the choice of marriage partners, otherwise a man's membership in ancestral families would have been far greater than it is. The explanation lies in the high regard with which the members of an ancestral family esteem the prerogatives they have received from their forbears. With the marriage of the first women, their brothers were called upon to share their rights, both practical in regard to hunting territory, and ceremonial with regard to dance prerogatives, with their sisters' children. Bella Coola mythology contains no references to unwillingness on the part of the first men to do this; in fact, their own children benefited equally from the marriages of their fathers with other women. But, say the Bella Coola, after these first marriages, necessarily exogamic, men realized that it would be foolish to allow their children to marry far afield and so diffuse valuable prerogatives. It was far wiser for a man to seek as future son-in-law a youth belonging to the same ancestral family as himself or his wife. Then any resultant children would come into this world provided by both parents with common relatives, so that the child would be, as they express it, "Held close and supported by a close circle of ancestors."

Bella Coola logic does not explain how marriages could have
582 been arranged in the early generations without violating the
614 laws of incest. The endogamic principle displayed at that
[773] time, however, has been carried out until the present day, so
that a man endeavours to arrange marriages for his children
with members of the same ancestral family. One of the
strongest Bella Coola desires is to "make good the path" for
his offspring, and this can best be done when they are born
amply provided with relatives of common ancestry. There is
[769] no belief in the active participation of distant ancestors in the
affairs of men, yet, though incapable of clear expression, the
Bella Coola feel strongly that a child is born into the companionship of its deceased relatives back to the beginning of time.

This endogamic principle will be described in greater detail 582
in vol. I, chap. VII, but mention of it here has been necessary [614]
to explain the composition of the ancestral family.

In recent years there has been a tendency for some men to marry foreign women in order that they, or their children, might obtain new prerogatives. Thus a trend towards exogamy has arisen from the same reason which is supposed to [554]
have caused endogamy. The offspring of such marriages cannot enjoy the feeling of strength and comfort that comes from the membership of both parents in the same ancestral family, but some individuals have felt that this was offset by the gain of highly desirable foreign prerogatives. It is said that this practice was initiated by a certain *Potlus*, father of a man about sixty years old in 1923. White influence probably [177]
had nothing to do with this radical innovation, although its wide adoption has been made more easy by the establishment of peaceful conditions on the coast.

Strong as is the belief in a common ancestry, it is unlikely 614
that this would have sufficed to hold together the members of 554
the ancestral family, without some definite prerogatives. These are of two kinds: names and land.

NAMES

The fundamental principle governing Bella Coola nomen- 551
clature is that each name must have originated in connection with some event of comparative importance. It is unthinkable to apply a casual designation to a child. At a person's death [768]
his name, or names, may be transmitted to a relative, and it [553]
is proper that the owner of a name should know when, by whom, and for what reason, it was first created. Tradition [773]
affirms that, before coming to this earth, the first people were all given designations by *Alquntäm*; these have been carefully handed down and are still in use. One name cannot be given to two individuals; instances occur of two people having the same one, but in such cases they have different origins. One [428]
person may have several names of different kinds, each carrying

551 with it some definite prerogative of a dance or other function,
428 but all are transmissible, and at the owner's death these may fall to different relatives. A name may pass from man to woman, or *vice versa*, in some cases with a minor alteration.
[756] The only non-inheritable appellations are those obtained by shamans as a result of their supernatural experiences.

551 Not only did each group of first settlers bring with them a
773 number of designations from above, but they also created a
553 number on this earth and bestowed them on their children, and on the children of their sisters or brothers, in whom they felt an almost parental interest. To mark the dignity of the names, all present at the ceremony of bestowal received gifts from the creator of the name, the person who called them together for the rite. The importance of the individual depended largely upon the value of the goods distributed with respect to his name, a concept which will be elaborated in the following chapter. The descendants of these first people likewise created new designations and established their dignity by distributing presents, a practice which still continues. It follows that any complete origin myth should include a large number of names, those brought down from the land above[1] and also those created by the powerful first people on this earth itself.[2] Both types of cognomen will be referred to henceforth as "ancestral names," no distinction being made between those actually brought from above and those made on earth. This is in accordance with Bella Coola usage.

553 Soon after the birth of a child his father, uncle, or other near relative,[3] either on the paternal or maternal side, calls the members of the village together to bestow a name on the infant. The one selected must be embodied in the origin myth of one or other of the parents, and must be one not then in use by any other member of the ancestral family. A relative may give the

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[1] Such a name is a *smailas skwatsits*, or "Petrified Name."

[2] Such a name is a *sxwanat-a skwatsits*, or "Earth-Made Name."

[3] The most careful investigation failed to show that it was incumbent on any particular relative.

child one of his own names, in which case the donor surrenders 553 all claim to it. This designation is the obvious mark of the position of the child in the ancestral family. Without such a formal conferring of an ancestral name an infant would be without status in the community, but, as children are always welcome, some relative is invariably ready to confirm the [431] bestowal by the necessary distribution of goods, a feature that is present in every Bella Coola ceremonial. On such occasions the guests are called by their ancestral names. An effort was made to learn what would happen if the number of children born into an ancestral family exceeded the number of ancestral names embodied in its origin myth, but no answer was forthcoming. Established custom demands that a name be provided for every child, and one is always provided. Without question designations must be invented, usually from some event in the origin myth, but it is always claimed that such were used by a long-deceased ancestor. In fact, the social custom agrees with the requirements of the mythological concept. Since bestowal of names is a matter of pride, it follows that a child often receives several from the ancestral families of which he is a member; the possession of these is a source of gratification to the owner.

An ancestral name given to a child is spoken of as an *ätsq̇tutl* name, and the recipient as an *ätsq̇tutl*, which may be translated, "commoner." He may be given several names from one origin myth, or ones from diverse origin myths if his parents are members of different ancestral families. These designations may either be those brought down from above by the first people, those made on this earth by them, or those made at some important event by later persons. Irrespective of what combination of these possibilities a child may have, [556] he is still a commoner, and his ability to rise to the position of chief depends on his own, or his parents', ability to give potlatches, as will be described in the next chapter. In such a case his *ätsq̇tutl* name is said to have been elevated to that of a *stälumx* (chief's) name.

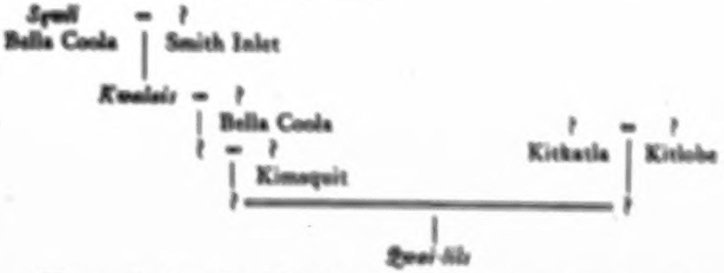
614 553 [773] *The ancestral family may, therefore, be defined as those whose ätsqtutl names are embodied in the same origin myth.*

What is the stability of this group?

In consequence of the large number of names theoretically embodied in every myth, and of the necessity for validating the bestowal of any one of these by means of presents, it follows that there is always a large number of dormant names. The Bella Coola describe these as being, "In the burial ground." They are, in fact, dead. Any one of these may be resurrected by any member of the ancestral family. If a woman marries into a foreign tribe her relatives occasionally give her husband, outright, an ancestral name. In such a case that name is permanently alienated from the family to which it formerly belonged; this should happen only when the group is reduced to a few individuals, all of whom agree to the transaction. [583] But more often a woman takes as a wedding gift to her husband a name which it is understood cannot be transmitted to one of his relatives unless he has children. On the death of the childless husband, this designation reverts to his widow's ancestral family. If there are children, they cement the bond of friendship between the two families. The brother of a woman so married also bestows names on her children, as further mark of their incorporation into her ancestral family. [583] It is customary and proper, however, for the ancestral family into which a woman is married and bears children to reciprocate the compliment a few generations later, and by the marriage of one of their women to restore such names to the ancestral family to which they originally belonged. According to the Bella Coola, this practice of "return-marriage" has been the rule since the first exogamic marriages of the first people, with the result that names usually return to the patrilineal descendants of the first people to use them.

611 614 If a woman marries outside her ancestral family, her children will belong to at least two distinct ancestral groups. It is difficult to say how long an individual remembers the dif-

ferent units with which he is connected, but the following is 611
an instance of survival for several generations. *Qwai-lils* is an 614
orphan about ten years of age, now living in Bella Coola; he is looked upon with considerable respect as being a member of ancestral families in Bella Coola, Kimsquit, Smith Inlet, Kitkatla, and Kitlobe. His pedigree, given below, explains his powers. The symbol = marks a marriage, and the male is shown on the left in each case.



Theoretically, *Qwai-lils* is as much a native of Smith Inlet as he is of Bella Coola where his father made his home. If he should visit Smith Inlet and make known his pedigree, he would be received by the members of the ancestral family of his great-great-grandmother.[4] His welcome would be more assured if he were the owner of a name from their origin myth. Difficulties of communication and frequent wars made it [628]
virtually impossible in the old days to keep in touch with relatives in distant tribes, except in the case of a mighty chief who was able to invite visitors from great distances to feasts. Thus names taken by women to foreign husbands were virtu- 614
ally lost to the members of her ancestral family. In the
course of a few generations, such designations carried afield 553
would be revived as if dormant by some member of the family, 178
and all recollection of the foreign marriage forgotten.

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[4] As the Bella Coola are now living in a single village, it was impossible to obtain [628]
a modern instance of the ownership by one individual of rights in a number of localities within the tribal area. It appears certain, however, that the sentiments expressed with regard to *Qwai-lils* at Smith Inlet are identical with those formerly held for possessions in ancestral families located in different Bella Coola villages.

614 553 178 773 The converse of this process of loss is the assimilation to an origin myth of names originally brought into the ancestral family by a woman from abroad. Unless intercourse and friendly relations were maintained by "return marriages," in a few generations no tradition would be remembered to account for the name, and this, if used at all, would be interwoven into the well-known ancestral myth. Hence a myth is not static with regard to the names embodied in it. These change from generation to generation; it is probable that elements of the story itself suffer like additions and alterations, even though the people do not consider this to be the case.

611 614 The Bella Coola regard the ancestral family as a social unit, not only in terms of the present, but as stretching back to the first settlement of the earth. Viewed from this angle, it is in fact, though not admitted to be so by the Bella Coola, a unilateral grouping with patrilineal descent, which may, in both the most recent and most ancient generations, be marked by matrilineal descent instead. A man frequently uses prerogatives obtained through his mother, her mother, or even her mother's mother, but it is tacitly assumed that for many previous generations such rights passed in the patrilineal line. Sometimes this succession extended back to the beginning of time; in other cases, prerogatives were transmitted matrilineally for a considerable period after the settlement of the earth, before gradually becoming patrilineal.

614 424 551 It has been thus far assumed that the only prerogative wrapped up in an ancestral name is a knowledge of the myth in which it is embodied. But there are others. For example, several of the first inhabitants of the world are said to have erected totem-poles, each of which was displayed by its owner at the gathering when he took for himself a name. Thenceforth, the only person entitled to use that particular totem-pole design was the person with the legal right to the name in question. [592] [535] The same principle governs all dance names; each entitles its owner to perform a certain ceremonial. Thus it is possible to enlarge the previous definition by saying that:

The ancestral family consists of those whose ancestral names, 614
embodying definite prerogatives, are embodied in a single origin 424
myth. 551

A stranger finds it easier to understand why names are so
carefully maintained within the ancestral family by thinking
of them as symbols of prerogatives, but it must be emphasized [554]
that the Bella Coola preserve with equal jealousy those designations of which the only prerogative is the marking of this actual membership.

If, then, the ancestral family be regarded as a group pos- 614
sessing a large number of name-prerogatives, it may well be
asked how these are distributed among the members. The 553
first point to be emphasized is that the ancestral family is a unit held together without definite social mechanism. There is no accepted "head" of the family, nor are there any clearly formulated laws governing the transmission of the name-pre-
rogatives. Before death a man usually calls together his 428
relatives and bequeaths,[4] according to his desire, his personal
property in slaves and canoes, and his intangible property in 553
names. Such a designation does not become the property 431
of the new owner unless he is able to validate his ownership by a distribution of presents; meanwhile the name is "dead." If, during this period, some other member of the ancestral family should desire it for a child, or for himself, he can take possession of it by the customary distribution of presents. In doing so he would anger the legatee, but the latter cannot himself
use the appellation since it is already in use. Even at the [578]
present time there are bitter quarrels over the assumption of names, and such have certainly occurred for many generations. If a man can validate fairly promptly a name willed to him, it is most unusual for anyone else to try to forestall him.

If a man dies intestate, his sons consider themselves his 428
normal heirs, and the most respected of them validates for
himself as many names as he desires or is able to assume. 553
Disputes are not as common as might be expected since the [578]

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[4] In case of sudden death or failure to make a will confusion sometimes occurs.

428 influence of a chief is usually sufficient to settle claims as to
553 which of his brothers shall receive which name. Even if none
[578] of them is a chief, some one of them is certain to have greater
influence than the others. If a dead man has no sons, his
daughters can assume his names, which they may transmit to
their children. Failing both sons and daughters, a man's
brothers and sisters are his heirs, as usual, the one of influence
being the one who really arranges matters.[*] None the less, it
[614] must be emphasized that if the members of the immediate
family are slow to validate a dead man's names, they may be
taken by any member of the ancestral family.

463 In former days it was customary to create a "remembrancer"
to preserve the ancestral myth. The older and more
869 influential members of the ancestral family would choose an
[614] intelligent young relative to whom to relate the myth in great
detail. One informant described how her mother, the last official
"remembrancer," had been instructed by her grandfather.
The old man had been accustomed to take his granddaughter,
a girl about twelve years of age, to bed with him, and whisper
to her the myth, with his hand pressed over her anus to prevent
escape of his words. At the conclusion of the recitation
[789] he always spat in her ears to make the words stick. The members
of the ancestral family, recognizing that the "remembrancer"
was the person best acquainted with the myth, were
wont to consult him or her about it, and, of course, about the
[553] names embodied in it. A "remembrancer" had no authority
to decree who should receive names, but appeals were often
made to him, and a tactful individual was frequently able to
settle disputes.

578 Considering the extreme fluidity of the whole system it is
428 surprising that quarrels are not more common. These are
limited by the system of wills, through which a man bequeaths
614 his most valuable personal property, especially his intangible
553 property in *kusiut* name-prerogatives (II, p. 2). Ancestral

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[*] At the present time the same principle governs the disposal of houses and gardens on the reserve.

names are also willed, but since their value depends on the 578
goods expended to validate them, there is seldom bitterness 614
about their allotment. Indeed, a chief who is the legal owner
of a designation which came from above in the beginning of 553
time, will in many cases choose to elevate his position with [428]
respect to a title of comparatively recent date. But if any
person who is not a member of the ancestral family should [685]
dare to use an ancestral name, all the members rise to avenge
the theft, for such they feel it to be. In recent years, however, [178]
this practice has become comparatively common. In such
cases a man, eager to share in the glories of a myth and able
to give a potlatch, has validated an ancestral name to which
he has no right. The presence of the white man alone
restrains the injured ancestral family. Names are sometimes [426]
lent or hired to those who are not members of the group for
definite sums; the recipient recompenses the individual. If [427]
such names are not returned for several generations quarrels
are apt to arise since the recipient claims to be the real owner
and not the temporary possessor. During his tenancy of the
name he is entitled to any prerogative attached to it, but he
is not considered a *bona fide* member of the ancestral family.

Instances have occurred in which an old man or woman, [428]
believing himself to be the last survivor of an ancestral family,
has donated his names and myth to those who have befriended
him, or these have been taken by those who buried him. Some [557]
individuals are constantly watching to conduct the funerals of
friendless old people in the hope of so obtaining names. But
in almost every case this leads to friction, since it is virtually
impossible for an ancestral family to die out. Perhaps in the
next generation, perhaps in the following one, some youth will
claim descent from the first ancestors of the supposedly defunct
family, and claim the myth and names embodied therein. This [628]
leads to a feud with the person, or his descendants, who has
received the names through aid given to the "last" of the
family.

Such instances of an ancestral family becoming practically 614
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614 621 extinct, are unusual; normally, the group is largely centred in one village, but with members scattered in other localities. There is no central organization. It is generally recognized that such a unit belongs in the village where its first ancestors settled, and the leading chief of that village is, therefore, an important person in the family, though without status of "head" of it. His advice may be appealed to in cases of disputes concerning names, but he lacks judicial authority. [622] [553] Theoretically, the descendants of the elder of two first people are considered as "elder brothers and elder sisters" of those descended from a younger brother or sister; but this is nothing more than an accepted fact; it plays no part in the social life of the community.

552 614 773 In addition to human names, the origin myths include those applied to dogs. The first ancestral group had dogs, and these animals had names, or were given them by their powerful masters. Ever since that time their descendants can apply these designations to their own dogs. It is unnecessary to validate such names, but no two canines can be given the same one at the same time, according to the rule which governs the bestowal of human names. This matter was not investigated in detail, and the only dog's name collected was one for which [539] the origin myth is as follows:

> [514] When *Tāl'io* was first settled in the beginning of time, the houses were built in parallel rows, one above the other, up the side of a steep knoll. At the very top was a toilet-house, built over such a steep incline that excrement rolled down the hillside. In consequence, one of the early chiefs living there gave to his dog the name, *Nulipuwał di muāl'*, "Rolling excrement," which has since been preserved in the ancestral family of his descendants.

LAND

124 423 177 Great difficulty was experienced in obtaining information about land tenure. The Bella Coola resent keenly the way in which their land has been occupied by white settlers without, according to their standpoint, proper compensation. Ques-

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tions on this subject always excited them, but every effort was 423 made to verify the following statements. [177]

As with names, the easiest way to understand the rights of the ancestral family in land is by first considering the mytho- 423 logical explanation, which mirrors conditions as they existed 614 at the coming of white men. On reaching this earth the first 773 people are believed to have prospected for suitable settlement sites, places where salmon and olachen could be caught, and [361] if possible, near side valleys where berries were abundant. Here they released the animals and plants which they had brought with them, on which they thenceforth subsisted, in accordance with the supreme deity's instructions. The members of the group pre-empted these areas for themselves. Waste land, far from any village was, and still is, free to anyone. A few years after the first settlements had been made, according to the myths, the supreme god sent down to Kimsquit a certain *Äiqunïäm* who allotted and marked the territory which was the property of each community; at that time a village consisted merely of a group of the first settlers. No similar myth was recounted for either Bella Coola or *Täl·io*, although their concepts with regard to land are identical with those of the Kimsquit. This really gave a sacred sanction to the possession of land, an important matter to a people so religiously inclined as the Bella Coola.

The system of land tenure follows the same somewhat 423 abstruse principles that govern the possession of names in an 614 ancestral family. Hunting and collecting grounds appropriated by the first people, or by their immediate descendants, are the property of their offspring, the ancestral family. The Bella Coola term for such an area is *sal"loam*, also called, *susmumsta*, which means "Food Supply."

It will thus be seen that a hunting-area is not the property of any single individual, but belongs to a group of persons, most of whom live in a single town. The relatives of a man [224] who intends to give a potlatch usually give him, temporarily, [431] exclusive rights to the hunting-ground. As with names, there

423 is no doubt that a man tends to lose those rights in property
which are strictly his, if they are located at a distance. Thus
614 several men claim that they are legally entitled to hunt at
Kitlobe, but from mere difficulty of access neither they nor
their fathers have exercised the right, and it would have been
lost in the course of a few generations, even without the utter
decay of custom which has followed the advent of the white
man. Practically, a man hunts only in the grounds of those
ancestral families in whose origin myths he has names, though,
theoretically, he is entitled to hunt on any hunting-ground of
any ancestral family of which he is a member whether or not
he holds a duly validated name from its origin myth. It is not
necessary to confirm the right to property as with a name,
though a validated ancestral name is the usual mark of a man's
right to that area of the ancestral family to which that designation
belongs. Although the ownership of land in distant
regions is of little practical importance, it is, none the less, a
[554] matter of great pride to a man to feel that he has rights in
many places. The efforts of an individual to make good those
[721] claims has often led to bloodshed; in fact, one intelligent old
man stated that property disputes were the principal cause for
war in British Columbia. A person who lacks hunting-grounds
[554] is little better than a slave, whereas one who has much land
is important.

The Bella Coola regard land as almost inalienable. Though
a man does not own the land of his wife's ancestral family, he
can use it and his children have full rights to it. Conversely,
a wife can gather berries on her husband's land, though it is
not hers. A guest at a village may be allowed to use the
[574] territory of his hosts, but it does not become his. In the old
days wars between the coastal tribes were common, but though
727 slaves were taken freely, land was never seized; such is unthinkable
423 to a Bella Coola. In fact, several of the older people
[567] inquired how it had been possible, in the first world war, for the
allies, whose cause they believed to be righteous, to annex
territory from Germany. If the victors had killed or enslaved

the Germans it would have been moral and proper according to Bella Coola ethics, but to take land was unheard of. 423 [727]

Since land is only valued for hunting or collecting purposes, it is not divided into small areas. Any man can build his house at will near the village. It is said that at Kitlobe the crab-apple trees are the property of different ancestral families, themselves members of different tribes, but this is unknown in Bella Coola. It may be mentioned that the Bella Coola [829] somewhat naïvely assume that all other coastal tribes have ancestral families similar to their own, although they recognize that some of them also have a clan system which has no counterpart in their social organization. Since the concentration of the tribe on a small reserve and the beginning of [177] agriculture, a system of individual ownership of cultivated land has sprung up. It is realized that if a man clears and [428] cultivates a field, the produce is his own, and he can will this land to whomsoever he pleases. Likewise a man who rings a tree to kill it for firewood is the sole owner. The Bella Coola regard uncultivated land in the reserve as being at the disposal of anyone, a concept which appears not to have been taught them by any white administrator. Its origin seems rather to lie in the old belief that any unpreëmpted land, far removed from a village, can be used by anyone. It is recognized that the reserve cannot be considered as a *sul'olam* belonging to any ancestral group, hence it is free to all. One corner of it, however, includes the lower part of a side-valley formerly used by the people of *Tcumatl*. An old man, whose ancestral family [614] lived in that village for generations, has set his bear-traps in this corner of the reserve for a number of years without interference from other hunters, who go far afield with their traps. Even within the limits of the reserve it is felt that this man has the prime right to that area for the use of himself and his family.

Theoretically an ancestral family may die out. Several accounts were received of old men who, believing themselves to be the sole survivors of their family, bequeathed their names 614 428 721

BC 614 428 721 and hunting-grounds to those who had helped them in their old age. But in every case the gift turned out to be of doubtful value, since young men grew up who claimed membership in the supposedly defunct ancestral family and combatted the right of those to whom it had been given. This always led to war.

BB BC 423 648 The following is an instance of a feud which arose from the bestowal of a hunting-area.

It is said that about 1850 the people of *Tcawat* (probably Bute Inlet) captured a Bella Bella woman as a slave. She escaped and fled up the *Tcawat River*, hoping to come in contact with the Bella Coola, who often hunted in that area. The woman was found by the mother's father of an informant who carefully looked after her while he was hunting beaver and brought her back to Bella Coola, thence sending her to Bella Bella. In gratitude her father, a Bella Bella chief, gave her rescuer the hunting-area known as *Nalam*, near Kwatna Inlet, with the consent of the members of his ancestral family. BB [425] The land so alienated should have remained permanently in possession of the Bella Coola ancestral family, but was too far removed from Bella Coola to be used regularly by the new owners. After the death of the Bella Bella chief, a number of individuals who claimed membership in his ancestral family asserted their rights to it. Many years later, after white traders had made their appearance on the coast, a Bella Coola went to *Nalam* and killed a large number of beaver. As he was leaving with their pelts he was murdered by some Bella Bella, ostensibly as a trespasser. But for the restraining influence of the white man this incident would undoubtedly have led to war. The informant still feels that he is entitled to hunt at *Nalam*, and did so several times when he was a young man; but his sons have never exercised the right, and it has practically lapsed.

BB BC 423 622 It is unfortunate that the above incident is drawn from Bella Bella, where the power of chiefs is much greater than among the Bella Coola. Consequently it is impossible to say

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exactly what right the Bella Bella chief had to dispose of the land. The informant assumed that he must have been powerful enough to dictate to his followers, an unknown possibility in Bella Coola. However, the informant regards the case as typical of what would likely happen should a Bella Coola try to give away land. Out of generosity or gratitude old men have sometimes done so, but always they have forgotten someone, perhaps a mere infant, who on growing up lays claim to the *sni'olam*.

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Hunting-grounds are not the only valuable parts of the country. Even more important are stretches of river suitable for salmon-weirs. Of the same type are good places for olachen-nets, and rocks from which these fish can be caught with scoop-nets. Like hunting-grounds, these are said to have been pre-empted by the first people[1] and have passed into the ownership of the ancestral families descended from them. It is needless to repeat the gradual lapsing of rights to property of this kind in distant areas, since the principle is the same as that already described for land.

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In one respect, salmon-weirs differ from hunting-areas, since the latter can be used by any number of individuals, whereas the number of salmon-traps possible at any one weir is limited. Again the mythological origin must be given to explain the customary usage. If, for example, a salmon-weir supposedly built by one of the first groups of people was fully manned in the third generation by ten individuals, it is as-

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[1] Several Bella Coola myths describe how the first-comers brought with them from above stone hammers for the construction of fish-dams, and how others were provided with miniature dams which grew larger when placed in position. Mr. H. I. Smith kindly gave the writer the following account, received from an elderly Bella Coola:

Long, long ago a certain Tamalsas lived with his father, the Sun, who decided to send his child to earth. He came down to *Slaas*, carrying a stone beneath his arm-pit, and accompanied by a Wolf. Tamalsas made the stone into a pile-driver with a face sculptured upon it, and with this tool drove piles to make a fish-weir. After a while a number of human beings came paddling up the Bella Coola River. In course of time the Wolf returned above, but Tamalsas remained on earth catching salmon, and teaching the people the method which was in use until the last few years.

423 sumed that ten is the largest number of traps possible at that
614 weir. Those who have the right to that weir are the members
of the ancestral family with the names of those first users. At
[773] this point the logic of the Bella Coola fails to uphold the mytho-
[224] logical pattern. No salmon-weir has remained in existence
since the beginning of time; when one broke, owners were
sometimes infants, and those who repaired the break became
regarded as the rightful possessors. The system of ownership
prevailing at the time of abandoning the weirs, was that *indi-*
[428] *viduals*, not groups, had rights to certain sections of the weir
which were willable like other personal property. In most
[431] cases this right was transmitted with a name, marking the
section of weir, which had to be duly validated by presents.
[428] In other cases, the intangible ownership was willed without
any mark whatever.* Unless bequeathed in this way, disputes
were frequent. Rights of this kind were never sold although
[427] an owner often leased his section for a night, or longer period,
receiving goods in return, and not forfeiting his ownership
[431] thereby. This was particularly common when the renter was
planning to give a potlatch. No case was heard of in which
the right to a certain section of salmon-weir was given to a
non-member of the ancestral family. Theoretically, this was
possible, but practically it would be so inconvenient that it is
most unlikely ever to have occurred, since the Bella Coola is
[671] never such a slave to legal privileges that he fails to be guided
by common sense.

426 Although individual ownership is thus recognized with
[423] regard to sections of salmon-weirs and suitable places for
olachen-nets, the owner is bound to share his haul. When he
catches a large number of fish, anyone, whether related to him
[577] or not, can demand some. He cannot refuse, since to do so
[626] would brand him as selfish. The effective check on this system

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[128] *Great difficulty was experienced in learning about the distribution of rights to sections of salmon-weirs. The evidence is conflicting, and though every effort was made to verify and check the above, there may be further regulations which were not learnt.

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lies in public opinion which expresses contempt for a lazy man 626
who is constantly begging.

To anyone familiar with the definite social groupings of a 614
tribe divided into clans or land-owning families, the ancestral family of the Bella Coola must appear as a vague and unreal unit, only distinguished by its intangibility. So it was found when investigating in the field. When information began to accumulate, it seemed as if there must be some definite obligations incumbent upon all members of the ancestral family, but none could be found. Without asking a direct question, the point was raised whether, if a man were killed, the members [627]
of his ancestral family would unite to avenge him. Conversely, were they liable for the deeds of any member? In each case the reply was in the negative; these matters concern only the immediate family. In regulating marriage the ancestral family [582]
is important, since it is wise for a man or woman to seek his mate within the members of that group, though it is not compulsory. Theoretically, the terms of kinship applied to mem- [601]
bers of the immediate family may be extended to members of [178]
the ancestral family, but in practice this is rarely the case, and, if so, is functionless. It might be argued that this somewhat wide application of kinship terms, verging on the classificatory usage, is a relic of an earlier, and now broken-down, clan system. It is impossible to prove or to deny such a contention. When trying to discover whether the members 614
of an ancestral family ever contributed to a potlatch whereby 622
one of their fellows established himself as a chief, the following 431
interesting comment was received. The previous winter the 171
informant had been in Bella Bella, and there the point was raised by a Bella Bella chief whom he quoted as follows:

"We laugh at you Bella Coola because each of you is always trying to be chief. Our system is much better; we all help our chiefs."

The man agreed with the Bella Bella man that there was an important difference between the practices of the two tribes.

614 The recent decay of Bella Coola culture may have destroyed
[182] traces of more definite obligations with respect to the ancestral
family, but all the evidence indicates that it has always been
a fluid unit. Its very lack of functions makes it difficult to
[128] discuss, and the above account was pieced together from scraps
of information collected from many different people at various
times; yet, intangible though it be, it is a very real unit to the
Bella Coola and pervades their life. Each individual knows
those to whom he is related. In many cases the exact kinship
is lost, but it is remembered that a man from such-and-such a
village married a woman from another village, and it is proved
from the use by their descendants of names from the same
origin myth. The concept of physical strength imparted by
a closely akin ancestry is always present and gives a person
the real "power" in the village founded by those first ancestors
614 of his. For the ancestral family is usually thought of in terms
621 of villages. A man belongs to the village where his first
ancestor came to earth, though he is equally a member of
other towns into which his ancestors may have married. A
[554] man without ancestry, without *sol'olam*, is a miserable creature;
he has no home in this world, or, theoretically, in the
world to come. The ancestral family is a unit essentially held
together by the ties of sentiment and pride of ancestry.

614 In addition to the above social elements of the ancestral
827 family, it is felt that all its members have certain tendencies.
If one of the first ancestors had a certain physical peculiarity,
or met with a particular kind of fortune, either good or bad,
his descendants are more likely to experience the same than
any other people. These tendencies may skip many generations,
and may be inherited either through the mother or the
father. In fact, Bella Coola belief on this point closely agrees
with modern knowledge of heredity; the term for such an inheritable
tendency is *osäloxiäm* or *uxäxsnuxdjut*. Such characteristics
are:

(1) Proficiency in using tools;
(2) Ability as a hunter;

(3) The bearing of exceptionally well-behaved children; 614
(4) The bearing of exceptionally naughty children; 827
(5) Disposition to steal;
(6) Uncontrollable sexual desires;
(7) Sudden death, that is, members of certain ancestral families are less apt than others to die of disease or old age;
(8) Death by drowning. One informant, in whose family this is a tendency, has twice been thrown into the water and barely escaped. He fully expects to meet his fate in this manner;
(9) Insanity (not a common malady); [158]
(10) Dribbling at the mouth with increasing age;
(11) Liability to contract the skin disease known as *loqalx̣*. 614
With regard to the transmission of this disease the surprising
information was received that if a relative of a sufferer should 827
drink from the same bucket or use the same spoon as the 753
patient, he is likely to contract the disease, whereas another 177
person can use them with impunity. This statement may be based on a knowledge of germs learnt from the white man, and warped by a belief in inheritable tendencies, although it is amazing that the theory of germs could have reached the elderly Bella Coola. Possibly this statement is a relic of an old belief in the transmissability of disease through contact, but it is more reasonable to ascribe it to white influence.

In a later chapter an account is given of certain occupa- 614
tional abilities, including that of carpentry, which must be
confirmed and validated by presents. The above are quite 827
different; they are either present or absent without any action on the part of the individual.

The Village Community

The village community referred to in the preceding section 614
consists, fundamentally, of the descendants, traced in the 621
patrilineal line, of the reputed first settlers to occupy a site. Since a Bella Coola always describes himself as a native of such-and-such a town, it follows that the village community

614 is a more obvious social grouping than the ancestral family,
621 though it is of the latter that a man is most proud. The
member of a small, unimportant village often describes himself
as a native of a neighbouring, larger one when at a distance
from his home, simply as a matter of convenience.

Even before the coming of the white man, village sites were
abandoned and people took up their residence with friends or
relatives elsewhere. In fact, mythology contains instances of
[973] such migrations at the very beginning of time. In cases of this
[361] kind, memory of the earlier home has been preserved for many
generations, and may perhaps be the explanation of the many
villages which are described as two, and which have two names.
In the early days immigrants seem always to have been welcome;
they added to the numerical strength of the village, and
the original inhabitants enjoyed boasting to the newcomers
of their descent from the first settlers. Since any group forced
to abandon their own homes naturally moved to those of relatives,
there is no difficulty in understanding the process by
[582] which they continued to intermarry with their new neighbours.
Thus two, or even more ancestral families, inhabiting
one village tended to form a closely inter-related stock. In
rare instances, two unrelated ancestral families may have
become inhabitants of the same village, which would unquestionably
lead to intermarriage.

In most cases the endogamic tendencies already described
cause the village community to be largely members of one
ancestral family. In addition there are always other occupants;
[563] strangers who have fled from their homes and sought
refuge among the Bella Coola; the offspring of illicit intercourse
[567] with slaves; guests; foreigners, especially Carriers temporarily
[554] resident in Bella Coola; and finally slaves, without status in
the community. The real inhabitants, those whose power is
firmly planted in the village, are the reputed descendants of
the first group of settlers, and accordingly a relative coming to
[553] dwell in a village usually endeavours to obtain a name from
the origin myth of the ancestral family occupying it, and thus

establish himself with the traditions of his new home. This 621
is another illustration of the patrilineal tendency of the whole [614]
organization. [553]

Politically, the village is the most important Bella Coola
unit. Usually, though not always related to one another, the
inhabitants are always friends. If an attack is made on a
village by a hostile war-party, all the inhabitants suffer equally.
On the other hand, if the residents decide to attack another [628]
settlement, there is no compulsion for anyone to share the
burden. Each individual, with the exception of slaves, follows
his own inclination. In the case of murder or other wrong [682]
inflicted by an individual, the responsibility rests on his immediate
family, not the village. Factions within the village seem [578]
to have been unimportant; individual jealousies were common,
and often led to murder, but if a family became unpopular or [627]
considered itself aggrieved, it usually moved to another village.
Neighbouring settlements were generally on friendly terms and [628]
often assisted each other in war, but this was not compulsory.
Indeed, cases are known in which a war-party from the outer
coast, about to attack *Sinxl*, passed within a quarter of a
mile of *Q̇omqo·ts* without its inhabitants even warning their
threatened neighbours.

As far as internal organization is concerned, the village is
as fluid a unit as are most Bella Coola groupings. If one individual 622
has attained a position of eminence through the potlatch 554
system (vol. I, chap. iv), he is "chief" of the village, and his
advice is generally followed. If several men have approximately [556]
the same importance, there is no dominating figure.
In any case, a chief lacks executive authority, and such obedience
as he receives is due to his personal influence. Some slight
deference is paid to the man who uses the name of the eldest
of the first group of settlers, the first chief, but this is not sufficient
to warrant the title of "chief" with the significance usually
attached to the term. The important members of the village 621
are accustomed to meet for the discussion of ceremonial mat- 623

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623 ters, and the village constitutes a unit for all dances; in fact
[535] this ceremonial unity is its most important function.

[796] With the exception of a few villages built on the seashore,
each Bella Coola settlement consists of a row of houses on the
361 river bank. These are of the usual rectangular, plank-built
[184] type typical of the North-West Coast. In front of them
[342] stretches a sidewalk, usually supported by piles on the side
nearest the river to make it level. The houses, too, in many
[171] cases have piles beneath their front ends, made necessary by
the steep slope of the bank. In large villages there may be two
rows of houses, behind and above one another. Usually there
[487] is a rough path parallel to the row of houses at the very edge
of the river. The number of houses varies; before the smallpox
[164] epidemic some villages contained as many as thirty or forty,
others, only two or three. There is no definite arrangement of
the houses; anyone may build where there is a vacant space.
[433] Much the same arrangement occurs in the sea-coast villages,
each of which depends for its main sustenance on an ocean
fish-trap, as the river villages depend on a salmon-weir.

342 The central part of each house is occupied by a large fire,
[354] often sunk a considerable distance below the level of the floor,
and around this is an open space free to all. Toward the side-
walls are raised the partitions, forming bedrooms for the different families, or for different members of one. In many cases
the flooring is removed in three or four parts of the house for
small fires on which different groups cook, the central fire
being used for heating and for more important meals. The
[592] number of families occupying a house depends on its size; an
[622] important chief, with many relatives, often builds an enormous
house which is occupied by ten or more families; smaller houses
contain only two or three. Life in the larger houses is free
and open; people are constantly passing in and out, and any-
[261] one present when food is being distributed is given a share as
a matter of course. Most of the houses are decorated with
[353] carved upright posts and paintings on the beams and back-wall.
[535] A door through the latter leads to the back-room, so important
in dances.

in dances. In front of most houses rises a short totem-pole,[*] 342
either pierced for the doorway, or standing on the opposite [211]
side of the sidewalk. [778]

The Family

It is probably no exaggeration to say that in every part of 594
the world the most important social unit is the family. It
certainly is among the Bella Coola, yet its lack of definite social
obligations makes it difficult to define. Reduced to minimum
size, the family consists of a man, his wife, or wives, and his
children. Such a unit occupies one of the bedrooms of a large [851]
house, and it is to such a family that an infant automatically
belongs at birth. Disregarding for the moment ceremonial
obligations, which are shared by others, it is the father and
mother who are responsible largely for the upbringing of the
child. Such education as he receives comes from them, with 594
the assistance of members of the ancestral family. This is 868
chiefly imitative; a boy, as he increases in strength, follows
his father on hunting expeditions or fishing. The mother
teaches her daughters how to make baskets, and they follow
her when she gathers berries, or when she cooks and performs
household duties. The Bella Coola are fond of children, in 855
many cases to the extent of over-indulging them, and they
grow up amid the open life of the large houses, absorbing infor- 861
mation of all kinds without being aware of so doing.

Only two kinds of functional training need be mentioned. 594
A wise father carefully trains his sons to remember their debts
(I, p. 369), and the method of teaching ancient myths has al- 869
ready been described; otherwise there is little direct instruction.
On the other hand, parents devote great care to furnishing
their children with every possible means of strengthening their
supernatural elements on which success depends. These can

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[*] Since the Bella Coola believe that totem-poles were used by their ancestors in early times, they are included in this description of a village, without reference to their development in post-European times. This account is compiled from descriptions given by elderly informants; it is inevitable, therefore, that changes due to European contact may be included. [177]

594 be made more powerful by magical means or the ritual acts of
869 relatives. Although these often entail great labour and expense,
parents seldom neglect their duty; in fact, care for their
children is one of the strongest Bella Coola characteristics,
though the methods used are so foreign to the white man that
he has difficulty in realizing their meaning. The hope of both
[847] parents is to have children to carry on their names; infanticide
is unknown and the death of an infant is mourned almost as
[586] much as that of an adult. Sterility and impotency are frequent
causes for divorce.

163 At the present time there is a high birth-rate in Bella
[165] Coola, although the heavy infant mortality prevents any appreciable
increase in the population. In the old days, it is said,
there were always large families, though much confidence cannot
be placed in this statement. In families where there are
593 several children, the first-born, whether boy or girl, assumes
an important position. His or her influence, as eldest, is naturally
considerable, and the parents foster this through the vague
feeling that it is proper for the eldest to be the most important
in the family. In adult years, and after marriage, the influence
of the eldest of a family continues to have considerable weight
with younger brothers and sisters.

592 If a man is poor he cannot hope to have more than one wife,
and his family circle will be limited to their children, and perhaps
556 to elderly parents. On the other hand, a wealthy and
[595] powerful man usually has a larger family. Not only may he
have several wives, but his aged relatives, and those of his wife,
[602] look to him for support and assistance. Such are usually welcome
to live in his house; they lend what aid they can in
collecting food, and it gratifies a man's pride and sense of
power to be closely surrounded by a large family. The Bella
[888] Coola are, on the whole, considerate to their aged relatives.[10]

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[178] [10] This is not true of the present. During the winter of 1923-4 a feeble old man, living alone, was often in actual want of food. Disliked and degraded, of a mean disposition himself, none of his surviving relatives, of whom the nearest were nephews, would take him into their houses. Commenting on this man's fate, several informants pointed out how, in the old days, such a one could have found

The married sons of a chief usually live in his house, and if he 592
is very powerful the husbands of his daughters may also reside 556
with him. Such a man is at the zenith of power, surrounded
by a close group, formed of elderly relatives, of children and 622
grandchildren. Connections by marriage are also added to the 602
family group. At the present time, for example, one Bella
Coola man is looking after his brother's widow, and it is felt
that she is a member of his family.

Another way in which a rich man can increase the size of 556
his family is by adoption. Parents who have lost an infant
may adopt the child of some member of the ancestral family of 597
either father or mother. The matter is usually arranged soon 614
after birth, and the transfer takes place immediately after
weaning. The real parents are willing since they know that
the adopting parents will be able to validate valuable prerogatives and names for the child, which they themselves are unable
to do. This desire for their child's welfare overrules parental
love. In such cases the real father or mother can likewise
bestow names and other prerogatives on the child, who really
becomes a member of two families. This is often done by an
old couple whose own children have married and moved away, [889]
and who thus find themselves lonely. It is considered disgraceful for parents to allow their children to be adopted by anyone
not a member of their ancestral family, since that would be
an admission of inability to bring up a child in the path of his
ancestors.

"Your father was not strong," could be said to such a child as a reproach.

In the case of an orphan some wealthy relative is almost 736
always ready to adopt him. Consequently, as he grows up, he 597
receives his full share of the ancestral origin myth, and the
names embodied therein, so that the loss of his own parents is
of little consequence in the course of life. Occasionally a child
is not adopted by relatives, and then his fate is indeed hard.

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shelter in the house of any chief, and shared in the food which was being distributed at the almost continuous ceremonial feasts. Now, each family lives alone and no one feels any responsibility for this old man. [178]

597 736 Ignorant of his ancestral names, and lacking the means to validate them even if someone should tell them to him, owning no hunting-grounds, the unfortunate infant is little better than a slave. This is almost unthinkable except in the extremely rare contingency of a child being left without relatives.

Although public opinion does not impel kindly treatment to orphans left without kindred, yet many Bella Coola have charitable dispositions and it is not unknown for a family to adopt and tend an infant without reason or hope of reward. One old man mentioned how his mother and a Chilkotin child had been born on the same day when a party of the latter had been encamped near *Nusq̣alst*. A few days later they left for the interior, abandoning the infant. The grandfather of the old man chanced to pass their camp while the ashes of their fire were still warm and found the baby, whom he brought back, to be a brother to his own daughter. His wife suckled the two, giving each a breast, and treating the foundling as her own. When the boy grew into manhood, he went back to his own people, but never forgot his adopted parents. Forty years later he visited Bella Coola, bringing with him his own wife and family. The old man who related this incident recalled the manner in which the Chilkotin had instructed his children to regard him as their brother.

597 [768] Children are not the only persons to be adopted. On the death of an adult his relatives may "adopt to replace" someone who has a striking facial resemblance to the deceased. Thus, some time after the death of his sister, a certain man was in Bella Bella and saw a Bella Bella woman who closely resembled her. He desired to adopt her, and since he was a man of importance, his wish was granted. To legalize the transaction
[431] he distributed valuable presents among the Bella Bella. A person so adopted does not usually change his abode, nor does
[601] he lose membership in his own family; instead, he becomes a
[835] member of two, with full rights to names and prerogatives in both, is addressed with the same kinship terms as if related by blood, and is likewise considered a member of the family
as far as incest rules are concerned

as far as incest rules are concerned. In this particular instance 597
the woman did not show any interest in her new relatives,
failed to visit them, or to take part in their ceremonies, so that
the adoption, though still legal, has practically lapsed. When [428]
this man dies his children will not consider the claims of their
father's "sister" to inherit any of his possessions, as they would
have done if she had showed herself appreciative of her
adoption.

It will thus be seen that the size and composition of the 592
family vary according to the wealth and influence of the
father. The duties of the members are difficult to define since
they concern almost entirely the routine of life. The father,
head of the family, directs the gathering of firewood, repair of
the house, obtaining of food supplies, and other matters of the
same sort. If he gives a potlatch his children must help him, [431] 2
which they do willingly since they gain from the ceremony.
If a father is too autocratic, his older, especially his married
children, simply move away. Nor is his power over his younger
children unbounded, since their mother's relatives take great [602]
interest in their welfare and would resent any ill-treatment.

If a person is killed or wounded, revenge is the affair of his 593
family. Just how many individuals are involved depends on 627
the composition of the family. In the case of the killing of a 682
child, living with his parents alone, none but the father would
feel it incumbent to retaliate. If an adult person is murdered,
his or her brothers feel and avenge the insult. But should an
important member of the community be slain, an old man
surrounded by a numerous family, it is the affair of all. Every
effort is made to slay the murderer, but if he should escape
from the country, the injured group is satisfied by killing one
of his family. Here again the same inexact composition is
found. A man's son, brother, or father are the only persons
strictly liable, and even here the common sense of the Bella [671]
Coola outweighs their theoretical laws. A murderer's brother,
living in another village, would not be held liable; but more
distant relatives living with the offender and considered as his
family are liable

593 627 682 [562] [683] family are liable. It is very rare for a woman to be killed in a blood feud. A death is answered by a death; if two persons should be slain for one murder the family which has suffered the double loss endeavours to kill another of their enemies. In case of wounding, an effort is made to wound the offender, but if he should be killed his family would try to avenge him. More often, one of the offender's family takes the initiative of offering goods to the injured family, "to cure the wound." If the offer is accepted, and the goods delivered properly, the matter is at an end. If a murder be committed within the ranks of the immediate family, for instance, if a brother kill a brother, revenge, if exacted, must be meted out to the actual offender. [622] If requested to do so, the leading chief of a village may offer his advice, but it is always considered that revenge concerns only the immediate family.

612 614 [627] [682] Revenge is a topic which shows clearly the essential fluidity of the family. There are no well-defined degrees of relationship within which responsibility rests. Instead, everyone knows, in the open life of the community, how many persons share the family life of the individual, and they alone are held to account, or they alone demand compensation. From its very nature, the family must be a bilateral unit which, when powerful, stretches out to absorb members of the ancestral families of both mother and father.

Not only does the family thus appear constantly to be attracting to itself members of the ancestral family of either parent, but these relatives themselves are deeply interested in the affairs of the family. This is most clearly shown in the case of children who, of course, are members of the ancestral family of both their mother and father. 553 612 614 [558] A few days after birth some relative is expected to call together the people of the village where the child is born for the bestowal and validation of an ancestral name. It is considered an evidence of poverty if this is done by the father, as if his child were only supported by his parents, not by a larger circle of relatives. It is immaterial whether this gathering be called by a relative

of the father or the mother. In June, 1922, a Bella Coola girl 612
had reached the age of about six months without having received 614
a name. There was much adverse criticism about the 553
parsimony of her father's father and her mother's father, who were held equally to blame, but who had really been deterred by fear of the law prohibiting the potlatch.

As a child grows older he is helped in the performance of 593
ceremonial rites by his parents and by their brothers and 604
sisters. In this, too, it is considered a mark of poverty if only 852
the parents take part. If a man's own children do not appear
likely to carry on the traditions of his ancestral family, he has [558]
no hesitation in favouring the children of either a brother or
sister, since, like his own, they are all members of the same [614]
ancestral family. Especially in Kimsquit[11] it is customary for a man to help his sisters' children; not that there is any lack of knowledge of the real father, but rather as a mark of respect
and family feeling displayed by a man to his sister. Moreover, [553]
in both Bella Coola proper and in Kimsquit, it is most improper for a name which a man has raised to a position of dignity by the expenditure of much goods to be passed to his own son; it should go to a distant relative. When a father validates a name for his child it should be one long dormant.

One aspect of the manner in which the family merges imperceptibly 593
into the ancestral family can be seen in the inheritance 614
of names. When a man calls his relatives together to
make his will he is guided in the choice of recipients by the 428
characteristics of his children. An able son receives much 553
from his father, but lazy children are slighted without hesitation. This is particularly true of names with which are bound up valuable dance prerogatives, whereas, as previously mentioned, ancestral names of which the importance depends

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[11] According to an intelligent Bella Coola informant, a Bella Bella pays greater [184]
attention to the children of his brothers and sisters than to his own offspring, and
the same man expressed the opinion that the Kimsquit practice was due to Bella [177]
Bella influence. Kimsquit informants denied this, though emphasizing the important part taken by an uncle in obtaining prerogatives for his sisters' children, in some cases to the detriment of his own, which is rare in Bella Coola.

593 on the value of the goods distributed in connection with them,
614 usually revert to the ancestral family and can be revived by
any member of it. It seems needless to publish lengthy pedi-
553 grees, illustrating the transmission of ancestral names; it will
428 suffice to say that such sometimes pass from father to son,
from a man to his brother's son, his sister's son, his sister, his
daughter, or to other relatives belonging to the immediate
family. On the other hand, with equal frequency, names pass
from a man to distant relatives of the same ancestral family.

59 Thus the Bella Coola family, important though it is in the life of the individual, cannot be defined with exactitude either as regards composition or functions; it varies according to the importance of its head, and tends to merge in the ancestral families of the parents.

KINSHIP TERMS

601 In Bella Coola, as in so many parts of the world, kinship terms mirror the social life of the community. The Bella Coola system of nomenclature is not as clear-cut in its application as in other regions, and requires considerable explanation concerning the uses of many of the terms. It will be seen that the system, although fundamentally founded on the family, presents many classificatory features. Whether or not these are to be ascribed to an ancient clan system is most doubtful; a short discussion of that point will be found at the end of this section.

The terms are arranged in the following order: first, an individual's relatives of the preceding generation, then those of the next preceding, with their parents; then those of the present generation, followed by terms for [illegible] of the generations following. Finally come relations by marriage.

TERM	DIRECT ADDRESS	INDIRECT ADDRESS
Father..................	[illegible] This term is properly used only by a small child, though often continued by an adult as a term of endearment.	[illegible] Term used only by a small child.

[195]

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TERM	DIRECT ADDRESS	INDIRECT ADDRESS
Father (continued)	*mān* Term used, rarely, by an adult of either sex; *tata* is more common. *Mān* is often used by an adult when speaking to any old man as a courtesy title.	*mān* Used by an adult.
Mother's husband	*tata* Terms used by small children.	*tata*
	mān Used by adult; more commonly *tata*.	*[illegible]* Used by adult.
Mother	*mamaa* Used by baby.	*mama* Used by baby.
	gamaa Used by small child.	*gama* Used by small child.
	ista Used by adults of either sex with same limitations as *mān*.	*ista*
Father's wife	*mamaa or gamaa* Used by small children.	*mama or gama*
	ista Used by adults, more commonly *gamaa*. The application to step-parents of the terms usually limited to the real parents is merely a mark of endearment, without social significance.	*[illegible]* Used by adults.
Parent of either sex	*[illegible]* These terms are used for a parent of either sex when old and feeble. Their use is a mark of courtesy and implies respect for those with wide knowledge of family history.	*[illegible]*
Father's brother	*tsisi*, or by name, or *[illegible]*	*tsi*
Mother's brother	" " "	"
Father's sister	*aukaam* " "	*aukam*
Mother's sister	" " " If the family contains more distant relatives of the generation preceding that of the speaker, for example, a father's father's brother's son, or a mother's mother's brother's daughter, the terms *tsi* and *aukam* may be applied in courtesy to those individuals.	"
Father's father	*tsakpai*, or more commonly, *tata*	*tsakpi*
Mother's father	" " " "	"
Father's mother	*kijaaa* " " *gamaa*	*kija*
Mother's mother	" " " " Especially when living together, children usually address their grandparents by the terms properly applied to parents.	"

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TERM	DIRECT ADDRESS	INDIRECT ADDRESS
Brother or sister of a grandparent	Addressed as the grandparent, especially when living in the same family. The terms are further widely applied to elderly members of the same ancestral family.	*mamamatsla* Seldom used term; more commonly spoken of by name, or as grandparents.
Great grandparents	As grandparents.	As grandparents.
Elderly male relatives spoken of collectively		*mnumnukhats*
Elderly female relatives spoken of collectively		*slatsnamts* These two terms are used with respect to a man's "power" through the possession of many elderly relatives.
Eldest brother or sister	By name, or *qwalim*.	*qwalim*
Second oldest brother or sister	By name.	*as-iko-sl*, or *alisht ol di qwalim*
Third oldest brother or sister	" "	*alisk*
Fourth oldest brother or sister	" "	*qwarwum*
Youngest brother or sister	" " or *sapinas*.	*sapi*

[178]

At the present time the intermediate terms are rarely, if ever, used. *Qwalim* and *sapi* are continually employed, the former for a brother or sister older than the speaker, the latter for a brother or sister younger than the speaker. When necessary sex is usually indicated by giving the person's name, or by the use of sex-denoting particles.

TERM	DIRECT ADDRESS	INDIRECT ADDRESS
Only brother with several sisters		*smilkpsts*
Only sister with several brothers		*dapnastsla*
Stepbrother or sister, same father, different mother	By name, or *qwalim*, or *sapinas*, according to relative age.	*nammanl dl mnnas*
Stepbrother or sister, same mother, different father	By name, or *qwalim*, or *sapinas*, according to relative age.	*nammanl tl stnas*

601

TERM	DIRECT ADDRESS	INDIRECT ADDRESS
Father's brother's child, or	No distinction is made, either in direct or indirect address, between ortho- and cross-cousins.	
Father's sister's child, or Mother's brother's child, or Mother's sister's child.	By name, or *[illegible]*, or *[illegible]*. These terms, though properly reserved for brother and sister, are usually used for all cousins in direct address when an individual's name is not employed. The choice between *[illegible]* and *[illegible]* depends on the relative ages of the parents, not on the ages of the speakers. Theoretically, this should be traced back to the first settlement of the earth, so that, for example, an old man claiming descent from the younger of two brothers who first came to this earth, addresses a young girl descended from the elder, as *[illegible]*. In consequence, there is often a choice in terminology. Thus a man calls his mother's father's elder brother's son either *[illegible]* or *sisai*.	By name, or *[illegible]*, or *[illegible]*, or, rarely, the inconsequential terms as used for brother or sister. *[illegible]*
Members of the ancestral family, considered the same generation but more distantly related than first cousins.	When male addresses male or female addresses female— *[illegible]* When male addresses female, or female addresses male— *[illegible]*	When male speaks of male or female speaks of female— *[illegible]* When male speaks of female, or female speaks of male— *[illegible]*
	These terms are seldom used except on ceremonial occasions when the bond of ancient relationship is invoked, especially if assistance is needed in danger. They are also applicable to first cousins. The term most commonly employed for these relatives is the one for "friend," or "partner," which does not necessarily imply relationship. It is— *[illegible]* *[illegible]* *[illegible]* are usually of the same rank and inhabitants of the same village.	
Male relatives of the same ancestral family and generation as the speaker.		*[illegible]*

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TERM	DIRECT ADDRESS	INDIRECT ADDRESS
601 [614] Female relatives of the same ancestral family and generation as the speaker		[illegible]
Child	[illegible]	[illegible]
[551] Son, until twelve or thirteen years old	[illegible], a term of endearment used for any small child, or by name. Use of the personal name becomes more frequent with increasing age.	[illegible]
Son, when adult	By name, or [illegible].	By name or [illegible] (man), [illegible]
Daughter, until twelve or thirteen years of age	[illegible], a term of endearment used for any small girl, or by name. Use of the personal name becomes more frequent with increasing age.	
Daughter, when adult	By name; infantile term of endearment is also sometimes used.	By name.
Stepchild	Same as for own child.	
Brother's child or Sister's child	Usually by same terms as own children, merely as a mark of endearment; also [illegible]. Corresponding to the use of [illegible] where [illegible] is actually applicable, [illegible] is used in some cases instead of [illegible].	[illegible]. Depending on the composition of the family, this term is in many cases applied to the children of an [illegible] if they form part of the family group.
Son's child or Daughter's child	Usually as for own child, or by name, or [illegible]. This last is merely the term for indirect address, with the endearing suffix, [illegible].	[illegible]
Descendants		[illegible] or [illegible]. Terms used rhetorically to describe a man with many descendants. The latter term means "[illegible]."
[614] Family		[illegible], the ancestral family, those who claim descent from one group of ancestors, even though their exact relationship has been forgotten.

TERM	DIRECT ADDRESS	INDIRECT ADDRESS
Husband	Usually by name, or *ti* [illegible] *ksi*, "my husband," or [illegible], "man."	*ti* [illegible] *ksi*, or by name.
Co-husband, in a polyandrous household	*[illegible]*	
Wife	Usually by name, or *tsi* [illegible] *lais*, "my [illegible]," woman.	By name, or *tsi* [illegible] *lais*.
Co-wife, in a polygamous household	*[illegible]*	*[illegible]*
Wife's brother and the reciprocal,	By name, or [illegible]	[illegible]
Sister's husband (man speaking)	″ ″	″
Wife's sister and the reciprocal,	[illegible], or by name.	[illegible]
Sister's husband (woman speaking)	″ ″	″
Brother's wife (man speaking) and the reciprocal,	″ ″	″
Husband's brother	″ ″	″
Brother's wife (woman speaking) and the reciprocal,	″ ″	″
Husband's sister	″ ″	″
Wife's father or	*[illegible]*	*[illegible]*
Wife's mother and the reciprocal,	″	″
Daughter's husband	″ or by name.	″
Husband's father or	″	″
Husband's mother and the reciprocal,	″	″
Son's wife	″ or by name.	″
Father's brother's wife	[illegible], [illegible], or [illegible] a term of affection without social significance) [illegible].	[illegible] or [illegible], "Wife of my [illegible]."
Mother's brother's wife	Same as father's brother's wife.	
Father's sister's husband	[illegible], [illegible], or [illegible] a term of affection without social significance) [illegible].	[illegible] or [illegible], "Husband of my [illegible]."

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TERM	DIRECT ADDRESS	INDIRECT ADDRESS
601 Mother's sister's husband	Same as father's sister's husband.	
Brother's son's wife or Sister's son's wife	Same as son's wife. " "	Same as son's wife, or [illegible], "Wife of my own."
Brother's daughter's husband or Sister's daughter's husband	Same as daughter's husband. " " "	Same as daughter's husband, or [illegible], "Husband of my own."

[597] In case of adoption, the same kinship terms are used as if the adopted person were a member of the family by birth. 601 553 775 A more complicated situation arises when a child who is regarded as the reincarnation (I, p. 6[illegible]) of a recently deceased elderly relative, is given the latter's name. In such a case the child is addressed by the kinship terms applicable to his namesake. In recent years, at any rate, this application is without social significance, and, as far as could be learned, this has always been the case. Bella Coola sentiment is that it is fitting for a child to receive the name of one of its ancestors. When a parent sees the child, and thinks of his name, he thinks of the late deceased, hence it is natural to use kinship terms accordingly. This is more obvious when the child is regarded as a reincarnation, though even in such a case he does not receive any of the marks of respect paid to his namesake; the reincarnation is physical, not social. In course of time this is forgotten and the child takes his place among others of his own generation, though it may be remembered in rhetorical speeches on ceremonial occasions.

601 The kinship terminology of the Bella Coola combines features of the family and classificatory systems. The reciprocal terms for parents- and children-in-law, brothers- and sisters-in-law, lack of sex differentiation for brothers and sisters, and the importance of age in the designations applied to persons of the same generation, are all features of the classificatory system. On the other hand, bilateralism, failure to

differentiate between cross- and ortho-cousins, and the unsystematic 601
groupings of nephews and nieces show "family,"
as opposed to classificatory, principles. Finally, rhetorical [602]
terms for the ancestral family, for many ancestors, and many
descendants, correspond to the importance of a large number
of relatives in Bella Coola thought.

In many parts of the world the classificatory system of 601
relationship occurs where the community is divided into clans. 614
The occurrence of some of these features among the Bella 178
Coola raises the question of whether or not they should be
regarded as survivals from an earlier clan form of social organization.
The Bella Coola may once have had clans, but their
relationship system does not furnish any real evidence to this
effect. The reciprocal terms really have the significance,
"Relation by marriage of the same generation," or "of a generation
once removed," a form of address which does not
require explanation in any ancient form of social organization.
Moreover, the importance of the eldest child, as potential
transmitter of the glories of the ancestral family, is sufficient [561]
reason for differentiating brothers and sisters in terms of their
relative ages. This feature suggests that in former times this
was more important than it has been in the recent past. It is
not implied that the Bella Coola never had a clan system, as
such may have been the case many generations ago, but their
kinship terminology can be explained without that hypothesis.
The somewhat wide application to cousins of terms which are
properly limited to brothers and sisters may easily have been
derived from a process of copying. The Bella Coola are well [177]
acquainted with the clan system of the northern coastal tribes,
so that it is by no means impossible, or unlikely, that they
should have adopted the principle of applying the same kinship
term to many individuals, and hence to members of their own
ancestral families. Finally, the somewhat vague and unsystematic 601
application of terms to relatives according to whether
or not they are members of the immediate family, is a feature
not at all surprising in view of the essential fluidity of Bella

601 Coola social organization, and of the absence of standardized obligations based upon specific relationships.

SLAVES

567 [554] Since a slave was[11] without status in the Bella Coola community, it is perhaps incorrect to include a description of slavery in a chapter on social organization; but as slaves lived in the Bella Coola villages, it seems reasonable to include them when dealing with the different units of the tribe. It was 162 567 impossible to obtain an accurate estimate of their number in Bella Coola; slavery has been so long abandoned that the present natives could only hazard vague guesses. Judging from conversational remarks by elderly men, it seems probable that in the old days there was a considerable slave population in every Bella Coola village, comprising at times as much as thirty to forty per cent of the total population.

567 727 When a party raided a village most of the inhabitants were slain, but some, especially children, young adults, or famous chiefs were captured. As far as could be learned, once a captive had reached Bella Coola he was in little danger, since torture or systematic slaying after the heat of battle had subsided was not a Bella Coola characteristic. The leader of the expedition retained many of the captives as his own slaves, and distributed others among his followers. Anyone, chief [422] or commoner, could own slaves in the same way that he could own any other type of goods.

567 497 Like any other commodity, slaves were bought and sold. The Bella Coola were usually so well provided with salmon that they were able to exchange these fish with the members [622] of other tribes for slaves. Lack of strong chieftainship among [726] the Bella Coola hindered their success in war, so that most of [431] their slaves were obtained by trade. To the same category belong those obtained as presents at potlatches. If, however, [773] a member of one of the tribes on the lower Fraser River was

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[648] [11] One of the first effects of the white man's establishment in British Columbia was the freeing of all slaves. Consequently the past tense is used in this section.

given as a slave to a Bella Coola, he was treated as a guest.[12] 567
Slaves were bartered between Bella Coola individuals as a [437]
matter of course. Their value depended on sex, ability, and
industriousness, as well as on supply and demand. When there [435]
was an over-supply, the value of a slave fell to twenty or thirty
salmon, but whenever an owner found that someone wished [437]
to purchase a particular slave he endeavoured to raise the price.
If a foreigner borrowed goods in Bella Coola he usually had to [426]
leave a relative as pledge. Thus, not many years ago, a *Xuxais*
Indian, from near Ootsa Lake, borrowed goods from a Kimsquit
man and left his son as pledge. The goods were not returned,
so the son was sold as a slave to the people of Kitimat.

It was not uncommon for a Bella Coola to lose his freedom 525
by gambling. At *lehql* especially, a player who had exhausted
his goods not infrequently wagered his children, or in extreme 567
cases, himself. If he lost, his children, or himself, became the
property of the winner. Unless speedily repurchased by some
relative, such slaves were usually sold or given away at the
first opportunity to a member of a foreign tribe, since it was
considered improper for a man to hold a member of his own 567
tribe in servitude. The same course of action was taken on [628]
those rare occasions when one Bella Coola village fought [727]
against its neighbour and prisoners were taken.

To the Bella Coola, who still consider a man's "power" in
the land as dependent to a considerable extent on his ancestral [554]
myth, a slave's greatest misfortune lay in the fact that he had [773]
no ancestral home, and hence no rights.

"No slaves came to earth with the first people," they say.

A slave was a stranger in a strange land, unsupported by a
chain of ancestors reaching back to the beginning of time. On
the whole, captives taken in war were better treated than other [727]
slaves since it was felt that such a misfortune might occur to
anyone at any time. They were frequently ransomed by their

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[12] This is said to be an ancient practice, due to the fact that several of the forefathers of the Bella Coola came to earth in that region and were on friendly terms with the inhabitants. It is conceivable that this tradition may have reference to the breaking away of the Bella Coola from the main Salish stock. [773]

[567] friends, a further cause for their preferential treatment. A
[727] Bella Coola who had been enslaved and ransomed had to
undergo a cleansing ceremony to remove the taint of slavery
[783] before he could take part in the ceremonies of the community.
It was impossible to learn the details of this rite.

[624] A master had complete power over a slave, unaffected by
the force of public opinion, since the affairs of a slave, being
without relatives, were of no consequence to anyone. Accordingly,
the lot of a slave depended on the character of his
master, and on his own ability and industry. An industrious
slave was valued; such an one would not be traded or sold
except through dire necessity, and in course of years he became,
as far as actual treatment was concerned, one of the
[424] family. Many masters gave their slaves *kusiut*[14] dance prerogatives,
expending large sums for the purpose. In such a
[431] case the slave might become an influential member of the
community, though the fact that he was not free was never
forgotten. On the other hand, a master had not the slightest
compunction about beating a lazy slave, and could kill him if
he so desired. None of the present Bella Coola has heard of
such a case; it was considered more sensible to sell or give
away an unsatisfactory slave. It was accepted as a matter of
course that a master should provide his slaves with food and
clothing, since anything produced or obtained by one belonged
to him. A slave-owner had full rights to his female slaves,
[837] and unquestionably exercised them. The only restraints were
the jealousy of his own wife, or wives, and the feeling that it
was undignified for a free man to demean himself. It was impossible
to learn with even approximate accuracy to what
extent intercourse took place between masters and slaves.
Probably not a great deal, though there was considerable
freedom of relations between slave women and the young men
of the community, unrestrained by the pride of chieftainship.
When a slave had been faithful for a number of years and had
[582] become almost a member of the family, his master would try

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[14] *Sisauk* privileges (I, p. 180) were more rarely given.

to arrange his marriage with some female slave; once this had 567
taken place, the actual treatment meted out to him differed 582
only slightly from that shown to a member of the family. In former times it would probably have been difficult for a stranger to tell married slaves from the members of the Bella Coola community until he had been long enough in the country to understand more than appeared on the surface.

Marriages between Bella Coola men and slave women were not infrequent, while like partnerships between slave men and even the daughters of chiefs were not unknown. In such cases
the status of the children depended on the performance of 431
ceremonies to wash from them the stain of their slave blood.
While the mother was still pregnant her husband would call 567
guests, not only from his own village, but from foreign tribes as well. Presents were given, according to the wealth of the donor, often aided by his immediate family, to "wash the child." Such ceremonies would be repeated several times before birth, and again at that time. Bella Coola sentiment was that such presents gagged the recipients; they knew of the dishonourable ancestry of the child, but the receipt of gifts
on his account had wiped away the disgrace. Such a child was [428]
able to inherit prerogatives from his mother's old home, duly validated in Bella Coola by valuables, and by his own lavish presents he could silence those who remembered the blot on his ancestry. Similar procedure was carried out if a free woman married a slave. Unless her husband were already owned by one of her family, the woman's father or brother would arrange to purchase him. Then, aided by him, they would give the same type of presents to clear the children from the taint of slavery. If this were not done, the children had only the status of slaves, though, born and brought up in Bella Coola and associating from infancy with their master's children, they were virtually considered members of the family.

"Washing the child," during pregnancy and at birth, sufficed to cover the taint on its history, but in later years if such [557]
a person failed to continue to give ceremonies, people would [578]
again talk of his short-comings. So, too, for the child or grand-

431 child of a mixed Bella Coola and slave marriage. As long as
567 such an one maintained a position of importance in the community
by the distribution of presents, nothing was said, but
578 if he should fail to do so, he could be, and frequently was,
[554] insulted by having references made to his ancestry. In case
of dispute or rivalry it was always a temptation to refer to
such a blot, but if he had atoned for it with presents, references
were considered improper. Unquestionably, memory of slave
554 ancestry was forgotten in course of time if the line was influential,
although recollections of the stigma were always carried
567 for at least two or three generations. At the present time
the most influential woman in Bella Coola, the one who has
given most presents, is the granddaughter of a Smith Inlet
slave. This man had lived in Bella Coola for many years and
had married another slave, by whom he had a son. The latter
became the husband of an influential *Stuux* woman. When she
became pregnant, her family secured the liberation of her
husband, and gave many presents to "wash the child." One
daughter was born to this couple, the woman just mentioned.
Her mother's relatives were influential, and her father was
[555] such an expert canoe-maker that he was able to win an honourable
position for his daughter by presents of his handicraft.
The woman, possessed of considerable ability herself, has been
able to give many ceremonies and so reach a position of eminence.
No one dares insult her by mentioning her ancestry,
but everyone knows about it and if her children should fail to
hold their position, they would be open to insult on this score.
The woman has validated names and myths derived both from
her mother and father, without explaining how the Smith Inlet
traditions came to Bella Coola.

To sum up, it may be said that the position of slaves in
Bella Coola was not particularly onerous, though it depended
entirely on the will of their masters. Without status in the
[182] community, a slave could have been abused by a cruel owner,
though the public life of the village, where all lived and ate
together, tended to break down the unsystematically enforced
differences of rank.

CHAPTER IV

RANK

Chieftainship—Sısaok Society—The Potlatch

CHIEFTAINSHIP

IN the previous chapter have been described the beliefs of 622
the Bella Coola concerning the origin of names, and the 556*
attitude of pride with which they regard those embodied in 431
ancestral myths, which carry with them prized prerogatives. But the unsystematic method by which ancestral names are inherited is sufficient to show that their possession, though valued for sentimental reasons, is not enough to make the owner a chief. On what, then, is Bella Coola chieftainship based? Expressed briefly, it depends on the number and value of presents distributed at any kind of ceremonial. To the Bella [424]
Coola, every rite, whether it be a marriage, the bestowal of a [773]
name, a dance, a type of funeral, or admission into a secret society, is a prerogative intimately associated with the myth by which the performance is authorized. Accordingly, the host is really displaying the glories of his ancestors before the eyes of guests present at the ceremony. To the Bella Coola it is unthinkable for such to be performed without the giving of presents to all; failure to do so would destroy the value of the prerogative. The potlatch is the ceremonial at which the most lavish generosity is displayed, but the principle of the acquisition of prestige by the giving of presents is the same for all other rites; the only difference is that at a potlatch a man is able to display his generosity to a larger number of recipients. In consequence, the aim of every ambitious man is to hold [554]
potlatches, since his status in the community virtually rests on his ability in this respect. The ritual of a potlatch will be given in detail in the latter part of this chapter, but its complications will be intelligible only after a description of the

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*556 broader principles of chieftainship. The first essential is to
431 consider the principles of present-giving.

PRESENTS

*556 Consider, for example, a man who wishes to take for him-
431 self one of his ancestral names, and at the same time to display
certain features of his ancestral myth—a particular type of
424 house, totem-pole, or dance used by one of his forefathers. He invites guests to his house, displays the feature of his myth, and must give a present to each to show the value of his prerogative and to demonstrate that he has not merely casually usurped the function in question. In giving a present of, for instance, $20, it is as if he said to the recipient:

"See! These are the glories of my ancestors of whom *I* am the descendant. *I* have a part in their fame. To make this valid I give you from my wealth a mere trifle, a matter of no consequence to me, who am so firmly established in the path of my ancestors."

*556 The guest receives the money with mixed feelings. On the
one hand he has received $20 as a "present." But if he wishes
431 to elevate his own position and his own prestige, together with
that of his ancestors, it is incumbent on him to repay this sum
with interest. Contrary to the practice among some other
[171] coastal tribes, there is no fixed rate of interest among the Bella
Coola. An ambitious man who seeks to become a chief will
strive to the utmost to pay back with heavy interest when he
himself gives a ceremony so that his fame will be carried far
[558] and near. If he should repay only the principal, he would be
regarded as having done all that was obligatory, but should he
fail to do even so much, he would soon sink to a position of
little consequence, no matter how lofty and distinguished his
ancestral name might be.

171 In this respect there is a parallel between the Bella
*556 Coola and ourselves. A man invited to a dinner party is not
558 compelled to return the compliment, but if, in the course of

time, he fails in any way to reciprocate the hospitality, he loses 171
his place among his special associates. So, likewise, the Bella 556*
Coola who receives present after present, but fails to give any
in return gradually receives smaller and smaller gifts and in 558
time loses his social position and influence entirely. As with ourselves, too, there is a disguised feeling of contempt for the *parvenu*, the man who, lacking the traditional dignity attached to one of the names which came from above at the beginning of time, has elevated the fame of a more recent name by ostentatious giving. But in Bella Coola, as with ourselves, success is the great criterion, and the donor finds his influence little impaired by the lack of one of the ancient origin myths. It is dangerous to cite similarities between the social practices of divergent peoples, and this one must not be stretched too far. The pride of a man in being able to incorporate himself in the traditions of his ancestors is lacking with the host at a dinner party, nor does the latter, to any extent, attain the status of chief through his hospitality. Further, a Bella Coola will sometimes endeavour to shame the poverty of a guest by giving him a large present. Unless the recipient is willing to admit his inferiority he must repay this with a still larger gift. The original donor will then vindicate himself by increasing the value of his next gift until a fierce competition ensues. This feature of rivalry in generosity is rare in Bella Coola, and never reached the same proportions that it did among the Kwakiutl.

The following is a good instance of the manner in which a 556*
haughty man regards the acceptance of gifts. A Rivers Inlet
man married a Calvert Island woman who went to live with 578
her husband. The man's mother, to show her amiable feelings towards the marriage, frequently gave thick slices of boned spring salmon, a great delicacy, to the family of her daughter-in-law. The Calvert Island chief considered these presents an insult to him, as if the Rivers Inlet people thought that he and his people were so poverty-stricken they lived on skin and bones. To avenge this slight he made war on the Rivers Inlet Indians and slew many of them. This attitude of the Calvert

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Island chief was felt by the Bella Coola to be quite natural; one of their own chiefs might have resented the insult in the same manner. This account may have no historical basis, but it is a clear example of Bella Coola sentiment.

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Further examples may help to clarify this point. A few years ago a number of Kwakiutl Indians visited Bella Coola to perform a mourning ceremony in honour of a deceased Bella Coola who had a Kwakiutl name from his grandfather, a member of that tribe. All the natives were invited to a large house, where the visitors gave a dance according to their own ancestral myths; the songs which were used recounted the history of the Kwakiutl name of the dead man. After thus displaying their prerogatives, they felt themselves obliged, and proud, as hosts, to give presents as validation. The sum of $546 was distributed among the guests. Realizing that it would be impossible to return such a sum by holding ceremonials in Fort Rupert, the home of the Kwakiutl, the leading Bella Coola decided to return the compliment immediately. The amount to be given was discussed at great length. Appreciating the courtesy of the foreigners in thus coming to pay honour to the deceased, it was not wished to insult them by giving a larger present, which would have had the effect of intimating that the recipients considered the $546 a trifling amount. Accordingly it was finally agreed to give the visitors about $300, which was done as validation of a Bella Coola ceremony at which the strangers were present. Thus the hosts allowed themselves to be shamed as a mark of courtesy. Not to be outdone in politeness, the Kwakiutl chief made a speech, expressing his willingness to allow the Bella Coola to drive him (this occurred in the days of horses and carts) to the wharf to take the steamer. In other words, he allowed the Bella Coola to put him in their debt, as they had allowed him and his party to do with respect to the distribution of money. The visit terminated with friendly relations maintained on both sides.

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The need of validating every ceremonial act by presents can be further illustrated by the following instance. When

the writer was in Bella Coola, a non-ceremonial entertain- 123
ment was given one evening at which several men sang 533
and performed. The writer was asked to sing a Bella Coola 556*
song, which he did in the belief that it was not one that was
incorporated in the ancestral myth of anyone. Unfortunately, 424
his teacher had erred, and as soon as the song was completed
an old woman arose and stated that it belonged to her ancestral
family. She avoided the difficulty of its singing by immediately announcing that the singer was her "son." Thus the writer was adopted into a Bella Coola family, a circumstance which aided him considerably in collecting information. This did not alter the fact that a ceremonial song had been sung.
Accordingly, the woman gave presents to the guests, thereby [597]
legalizing the adoption, and saving herself from the disgrace of having one of her songs used as if it were a matter of no consequence, free to anyone.

SEATING

Presents are also a means of obtaining seats. Every Bella 551
Coola has at least one name embodied in an ancient myth. 556*
A man who wishes to become a chief can do so only by giving
lavish presents to make his designation "strong," "firm," or [622]
"bright," to use Bella Coola expressions. Such gifts increase
the importance of the owner's name, and they obtain for him [424]
the right to a seat, more or less definitely located, in the house.
Since all Bella Coola habitations are built on similar lines, a man can occupy his wonted position when summoned to a
ceremony in any house. The validating of ancestral names [553]
and the acquisition of seats are among the important features which occur at potlatches.

In the beginning of time, when the first people were sent [773]
down to populate the earth, it is assumed that each who established a village, consisting of a single house, seated himself in the best spot within the dwelling, namely the central position behind the fire; his younger relatives ranged either beside him

554 or sat in two rows, facing one another, on opposite sides of the
556 central fire, parallel to the side walls of the house. When these
[773] first ancestors died, the name of each was passed on to some
descendant. The Bella Coola feel that he who bears the name
[551] of the first settler in a village should have his ancestor's seat.
[171] Comparison with the practices of other coastal tribes suggests
that formerly the Bella Coola must have had a definite series
of seats in their houses; either according to the rank of the
occupant, or according to the rank of the ancestor whose name
he bore. The most careful investigation, however, failed to
show such a system of ranked seating. The only indications
that such may once have been customary, are found in the
feeling today that the bearer of the first chief's name ought to
occupy the central seat behind the fire, and in the expression,
"He seats himself where his ancestor sat," when a youth is
given his place in the house.

[551] A seat can be claimed and an ancestral name assumed at
any age. Goods must be given away which are said to be
"covering" for the young man, to have "flowed away," or to
have "become nothing" for the name. These validate the
official assumption of the designation. With it is given a place
in the house. A seat is chosen at the side of the fire, and the
goods mark that spot as his in conjunction with the name.
[424] The seat itself is not material, though the general location on
which a person shall sit is indicated. His "seat" is the goods
that have been expended. Several men may have positions at
practically the same spot, but when all are seated they merely
move slightly so that all have room. There is no thought of
one person infringing on the location of another. A parent
who gives ample wealth at successive potlatches may seek for
his son a seat behind the fire. Such is entirely his own affair
and if sufficient goods are distributed the son may seat himself
in that place, but if the gifts are of little value the occupant is
secretly held in derision, as having a seat that is unsound, or
unfirm. In later years the man may expend large sums in
strengthening his seat; by so doing he wins recognition from

all that he sits in an enviable spot, irrespective of its location 554
in the house. 556*

In precisely the same manner a man may take for himself
a seat in the central part of the row behind the fire, but he is
laughed at for endeavouring to assume a dignity, unworthily,
unless he can validate his position by lavish presents. The
Bella Coola are always ready to make fun of a person who fails
to maintain his seat. On the death of the occupant of the
central position it is taken for granted that whoever inherits [424]
his name will assume that location and give the essential presents, [428]
but it is not incumbent upon him to do so. He may
choose to establish his new name at his old station, beside,
instead of behind, the fire. Thus it has come to pass that the
seat of the most important chief of a village is often at the side
of the house. When all are seated the chiefs may be widely
separated, and a parent may have obtained for his son a seat
in a better part of the house than his own. But as a rule the [622]
chiefs sit in a row at the back of the fire, the most influential
one in the middle. There must have been feuds when two
men desired to seat themselves in the central position at the
same time, but disputes about this were uncommon, because [424]
a man's seat was, and still is, primarily regarded as the intangible
goods wherewith he is clothed, rather than his right to
sit at any particular spot. It is these non-material coverings
that enable a man to be bold and assertive in argument or
suggestion, in fact to be a chief. A young man may have
had conferred on him one of the noblest names, but his influence
depends on the value of the goods expended on his behalf,
subject of course to the universal characteristic that a man
of forceful character may have more influence than his actual
position warrants.

Jealous feuds are common when the man who owns the
name of the first chief, first ancestor of a village, has duly [578]
validated it, but is being eclipsed in the giving of potlatches [682]
by a man whose name is of less intrinsic importance. Such a
complication recently arose at Kimsquit, and the Bella Coola

554 ascribe two murders which took place there in 1915 to jealousy engendered by rivalry.

·556 [578] [682] [620] A *chief* who desires to have his son, or other near relative, succeed to his actual seat may validate for him a position at his feet. If several potlatches be given, with distribution of goods for this purpose, it becomes recognized that the son shall take his father's seat. None the less, he will not have his father's influence or prestige unless he can himself continue to give away goods, because the power of a chief rests on this, not on his ancient name or the location of his seat.

553 ·556 Further evidence that a man's influence rests less on his actual name than on the wealth distributed with reference to it is found in the lack of uniformity in the type of names validated. Those of highest potential importance are the ones brought to the earth by the first-comers, yet in many cases a man prefers to elevate his position with respect to a name of later origin. It is not uncommon for a man to validate several ancestral designations, and choose one of them to be his most important by valuable gifts for the seat which he occupies with respect to it; or in other cases a name of modern origin is selected and elevated. Thus, a certain Bella Coola chief who is the legal owner of the names *Ẓpil* and *Xemlais*, two of the first people to settle this earth, has based his greatness on the goods expended for a seat with reference to the name *Sidaalaa*, of more modern origin. It is accordingly clear that any Bella Coola can rise to a position of importance, even though he lacks the right to one of the most ancient names. Moreover, some chiefs prefer to validate several names rather than concentrate on one alone.

[620] Furthermore, a powerful *chief* can create a name. In this case the "power" of the designation rests, not in any supernatural origin, but in the actual wealth distributed. Two examples will serve to illustrate this point. Between 1880 and 1890 a *chief* was preparing to give a potlatch at which his nephew was to receive a name, when fire destroyed the village with the exception of his house. This added to the value of

the food and goods distributed, since it was winter and the 553
people were in dire straits on account of the destruction of all 556 *
their stores. In consequence, the uncle decided to make a new name for his nephew, *Jlâml*, "Charred Wood." By virtue of the goods expended this name became an honourable title, and was maintained by lavish presents. Any similar incident connected with a potlatch can be made the origin of a designation. Another example of a manufactured name is one derived from a peculiarity of the man giving the potlatch. A number of years ago a chief was jeered at by his associates on account of the frequency with which he had to visit the toilet. When next he gave a potlatch he created the name *Âpstl-a*, "The Toilet One," and gave great dignity to the designation by presents.

Since a seat is valuable only on account of the goods ex- 554
pended in obtaining it with respect to a certain name, it is 556 *
obvious that names and seats are closely associated. A man who wishes his son to succeed to his own location in the house seats the youth, as has been described, at his feet. It may be a matter of years before he actually takes his father's position, but during that time he is treated with respect; he is still a commoner, but it is recognized that his parent considers him likely to "make good" and become a true chief by ability to give presents. Should he fail to do so, inexorably his influence wanes, in spite of his name and duly validated seat. He keeps the latter, but it is no longer considered one of importance. [551]
Thus, too, the course of names from generation to generation is a series of curves; sometimes one is on a pinnacle of glory when "made strong" by a powerful chief, but in the next generation it may fall to the dust through ownership by a [195]
weakling. As the Bella Coola express it: It has become hermaphroditized.

A woman is rarely established in a seat, and usually only [522]
when a chief has no sons or other near male descendants. In such a case she receives an ancestral name and has the same status as a male chief. At the present time one important

554 chief had thus obtained a seat for his daughter, as well as ones
*556 for his two sons. But usually a woman continues to use the
562 ancestral name given to her in infancy until she is able to
assist her husband in a potlatch, when a name is validated for
[553] her (see I, p. 410). The ancestral names of the first women
to occupy this earth are reserved for women and, like men's
names, vary in prestige according to the prowess of their
owners. Most names given to children, though embodied in
[551] origin myths, are applicable to either sex; and these are the
common designations of women. Cases are known in which a
woman has assumed an ancestral name if her brother has allowed
it to fall into ill-repute through failure to give potlatches.

554 With such a fluid system, no fixed line can be drawn between
*556 chief and commoner. But after his fourth potlatch a
man's influence in the community has become so great that
622 he will usually feel justified in having the carpenters make for
[359] him a material seat. There is nothing to prevent a person
having one made for him before he has given the requisite
number of potlatches, but too rapid assumption may render
him liable to the scorn of the community through his failure
to show himself sufficiently "strong." The contempt shown
[626] to anyone attempting to usurp too lofty a place is a strong
deterrent to a proud young man.

[532] On the material seat are carved the man's ancestral crests,
in other words the forms in which his first ancestors came to
[352] earth, or some of the beings with whom they came in contact.
To show these is a matter of pride, but unless the display
is fittingly validated, the man's own dignity will be
lowered, as well as that of his ancestors. Construction of a
seat is particularly common when a man is establishing himself
in the central position behind the fire, and claims this to be
where his first ancestor sat. Others among the first people
may have chosen seats in other parts of the house, and in these,
likewise, a man who is taking his ancestral name may have a
material seat constructed. Establishment in such a position
increases a chief's feeling of mental superiority, as if strength-

ened by the age-long power of his ancestor. Finally, in old 554
age a powerful chief is careless where he seats himself; his 556*
fame is so great that he can afford to disregard all conventions. 622
[183]

POWER OF CHIEFS

It will be seen from the foregoing that chieftainship among the Bella Coola does not depend on hereditary rank, still less on an elective principle, but on the individual's prestige as displayed, especially in his ability to acquire for himself a firm seat by the giving of presents. As he continues to do so his influence becomes ever greater. Consequently, it is impossible to state clearly what are the powers of a chief; such depend upon his prestige and influence. For a Bella Coola chief has no executive or judicial authority; what deference is shown to him depends on his success as a man, a factor which is constantly rising or falling.

The coming of the white man has enabled the Bella Coola [illegible]
to earn comparatively large sums of money by trapping and
fishing. This in turn has enabled nearly everyone to give at [434]
least one potlatch, a very different state of affairs from that
which prevailed in the last century when it required years of
toil for a man to amass the necessary food and skins. Consequently, in many towns there were no men who had given
potlatches, so that a man's prestige was estimated by the [431]
presents he had given at smaller ceremonies. Sometimes, [535]
moreover, a man preferred to increase his fame by giving rites
of a different nature, such as *kusiut* dances, and the presents
then distributed might elevate him in the eyes of the community, to a position above that of a man who had given a
potlatch. This, however, was unusual.

After a fourth potlatch a man is accorded a position of
eminence, and is termed a *numitl chief*. *Numitl* is an untranslatable word, with the significance of "passage," an allusion
to the amount of goods which have passed through his hands.
Jealous and vulgar-minded persons pun on the word, applying [578]

554 it to the digestive tract. After a man has given four potlatches
* 556 he feels superior to those who have been unable to do likewise.
His name is "bright," "clean," "heavy," "firm," or "upright"
622 in Bella Coola terms, and so, likewise, his seat. He feels inde-
[578] pendent and proud. Such a chief will fearlessly enter the back-
room where ceremonial rites are taking place, even if not en-
titled to do so.

"He is so strong, he can go where he will," say the Bella Coola.

The advice of such a man is taken because of his ability
and prestige, especially by the members of his own family.
A few years ago, for example, when a certain Bella Coola died,
his brother wished a *kusiut* name-prerogative of the deceased
to pass to the dead man's daughter. The girl's mother's father,
a *numitl* chief, objected, and his desires were followed, although
the name in question was not connected in any way with his
family. In small matters, too, people gladly carry out the
[592] wishes of a chief. Work around the house is done for him
without thought of disobedience. An old man was asked
whether, when he was young, chiefs gave many orders and
acted as masters in their households.

"You bet," the old man answered emphatically with a dry chuckle.

231 It is difficult now to form an accurate estimate, from obser-
vation, of the influence of chiefs solely through virtue of the
552 goods they have expended. But the following is a concrete
622 example. In November, 1923, the writer, while walking
through the Bella Coola village, was bitten by a dog. He was
told that the animal belonged to a certain old woman. When
next he saw the owner he asked her whether she knew that her
dog attacked passers-by.

"Yes," she answered, in a matter-of-fact tone, "He is a chief and can do what he likes."

Further questioning elicited the information that the old
[766] woman and her husband, the childless last survivors of an
ancestral family, had transmitted some of their ancestral

names to their dog, and had distributed presents to validate 231
the bestowal. Consequently, the animal is a chief (see Plate 552
11)§ and can do as he likes. When it dies it will be mourned 622
as a chief. Moreover, a number of people have returned the 766
presents which they received at the time the dog was made a chief, and this money is kept by the woman and her husband, to be used when they perform the rite of mourning for the dog at death.

When this is possible, in the present degenerate days, it is 556*
not difficult to understand how, formerly, a great chief felt 622
himself above the restraints that hindered lesser men. The [556]
last great Bella Coola chief was *Potlas*, who died between 1870 and 1880. His influence and power were so great that he was a virtual ruler, daring anything. If he requested a young man to take his food box home and the youth was slow to obey, *Potlas* had no hesitation in killing him on the spot. Such great power, though unusual, is intelligible to the Bella Coola, since *Potlas* gave far more potlatches than any of his contemporaries. Other chiefs have been known to attempt a similar arbitrary use of power, but have failed, since their prestige was not great
enough to justify it. The fame of a mighty chief spreads up [624]
and down the coast, and protects him and the members of his family from being ambushed and slain in any sporadic
foray. During an actual fight, however, a chief had to take [726]
his chances with the rest, but the comparative immunity was a great advantage.

The Bella Coola recognize the fundamental differences 171
between their own concepts about chieftainship and those of 556*
other coastal tribes with whom they come in contact. This 622
point was mentioned in the course of conversation by several 629
men. The most powerful chief known to them was *Tsibas*, who, they say, was virtual monarch of the Kitkatla. None of his subjects could go hunting without his permission, and he had rights to a certain share of their booty. At any ceremony presents had first to be given to him, and if he were slighted in this respect, he would kill the offender. It is be-

§[See, vol. II, p 46 (c) - ANALYST]

171 lieved that all the Kitkatla chiefs were powerful, but *Tsibasa* 556 was the greatest of all. It is said that one of his prerogatives[1] 622 was to exercise *jus primae noctis* whenever a Kitkatla was 721 married. Without question, tales of this chief's prowess have become exaggerated in transmission, none the less they show that the Bella Coola realize the great importance of the northern chiefs. Concerning their nearer neighbours, the Bella Bella, the Bella Coola understand the way in which the members of a family combine to help their chief in the giving of presents.[2] They say that the Bella Bella consider the Bella Coola practice of each one endeavouring to make himself a chief to be foolish in the extreme. Such is also said to be the opinion among the Kwakiutl, who support their contention that in Bella Coola all are chiefs, from the fact that flooring exists under the seats of all, whereas in Fort Rupert, their home, such occurs only beneath the seats of chiefs.

262 Corresponding to the extreme paucity of functions pos- 574 sessed by Bella Coola chiefs, their prerogatives are likewise 622 scanty. Indeed, they take their validated seats only during certain rites of the secret society connected with chiefs, at potlatches, and at ceremonial meals. These last occur whenever a deer or seal is killed; the latter is considered a great delicacy.[3] Anyone can kill a seal, but it would be unthinkable for a Bella [225] Coola to share its flesh with his immediate family only. The [262] animal is cleaned, the hole made by bullet or spear carefully plugged, and the carcass boiled whole in a large box. Mean- [203] while a herald (I, p. [illegible]) summons the chiefs to the house where the successful hunter lives. If the meal is to consist merely of one small seal, only a few chiefs are invited, those of greatest influence through their possession of "strong" seats. When [572] several seals have been killed, the number invited is correspondingly larger, but no woman may partake unless she ranks

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[1] This is said to have been a personal prerogative, not shared by all chiefs, and requiring validation by valuable presents.

[171] [3] Only traces of the rite described in this paragraph occur at the present time. In fact, the reservation of seal meat for chiefs alone was discontinued towards the close of the last century.

as a man by the duly validated ownership of a chief's name in her own right. Formerly a slave was never allowed to eat seal, unless he had been the slayer. If many seals are killed, chiefs from adjacent villages are sometimes invited. The chiefs seat themselves according to their proper positions and are first served with the blood-stained grease that floats to the top of the water as the meat is boiling. When cooked, the meat is cut into strips, measured in terms of so many finger breadths, according to the number of guests. The cuts run down each fore-flipper, so that each receives a narrow strip including one of the toes. The head is always given to the herald.[1] 262 574 622 [562] [527] [426] [209]

Wealthy chiefs frequently invite their fellows to ordinary meals even when no seal or deer has been killed. On these occasions, as at seal feasts, the guests are designated by their ancestral names, not by those in general use. [551]

Chiefs are also accustomed to meet for the discussion of matters connected with the winter ceremonial; on such occasions their number may be augmented by men of influence in the secret society, though they do not rank as chiefs. Such a meeting is always called when a new member is to be initiated into the *Kusiut* society. If there is difference of opinion the influence of even a *[illegible]* chief is outweighed by a man of importance in the society. The matter is discussed by all present and a decision reached by general agreement. It is difficult for a white man to understand how such is possible without either a vote, or general recognition by all that the views of some individual must be accepted. The writer was present at one such meeting, and was struck by the manner in which, after considerable, and at times heated, discussion, a consensus of opinion was reached, and accepted even by those who had proposed a contrary course. 575 622 623

Near every village is a place where the chiefs hold such meetings. All the inhabitants know the general locality, but [778]

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[1] Every effort was made to ensure the accuracy of this account, but errors may have crept in on account of the length of time which has elapsed since the ceremony was carried out in full detail. [114]

622 623 778 [575] there is such dread of the supernatural powers possessed by members of the *kusiut* society that none would dare go there. If an uninitiated person should do so, he would formerly have been either killed or initiated into the society. The meeting-place of the *Qomqo·ts* chiefs is on a ledge of rock jutting out over a waterfall about a quarter of a mile from the village. The stream winds down a narrow cleft of the mountain side, screened by dense vegetation, and suddenly falls into a cauldron, so hemmed in by cliffs that no sunlight can enter. The ledge is immediately above the brink of the falls, one of the most awe-inspiring places imaginable. The meeting-places of other villages lack such natural settings, though all are at the bases of cliffs, or near some easily distinguished feature. Some

778 532 778 [211] of them are decorated with rude carvings, pecked into the stone. The meaning of the designs is not known to any of the present inhabitants. Some of them were made, long ago, by chiefs when they were composing tunes; they pecked out the rock in time to the music forming in their minds. Others were mere memorials of certain events. If a chief gave an important ceremony, he, or one of his friends, carved a figure, perhaps that of a man, perhaps of some animal connected with the rite, to recall the occasion. No carvings have been made within the life-time of any Bella Coola, so it is probable that they had further significance, now unknown.

622 623 201 When a chief wishes to summon his fellows for a meeting he visits each and notifies him by a simple pressure of the foot, in many cases unobserved even by those sitting near. The person so called slips away, unostentatiously, to the meeting-place.

578 622 623 [157] The position of chief was not without disadvantages in the old days. The Bella Coola are so jealous that anyone who succeeded in elevating himself to a position above his fellows became an object of envy. Their mythology contains many examples of the murder of some powerful chief by rivals of his own village, and informants of today state that these records are true. One intelligent man asserted that his father had

than been slain about seventy years earlier. It appears that attempts were commonly made to kill chiefs by means of sympathetic magic, and it is quite possible that such attempts, becoming known, preyed upon the minds of the victims to such an extent that death resulted.

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WEALTH

Since wealth is so important in chieftainship, it would be desirable at this point to consider the concepts of wealth. Unfortunately, it is impossible to give a satisfactory treatment of this subject. The coming of the white man altered the economic aspects of Bella Coola life so radically, and at such an early period, that concrete examples of economic interdependence, so useful in a thorough study, could not be obtained in the field. It is possible that greater attention to this subject might have produced more satisfactory results, but I am doubtful of this.

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In the old days, "wealth" was of two categories: (*a*) Prerogatives, tangible or intangible, which could be shown, pictorially or dramatically, or could be expounded in words; and (*b*) Goods which could be distributed for validating such prerogatives. Individual possessions, unsuited for distribution, were hardly considered as wealth; a sewing-machine, a bottle of whiskey, a bed, or some other luxury might give satisfaction to the owner, but did not increase his importance in the eyes of his fellows. The value of objects was only for their use in ceremonial distribution; indeed, prior to such distribution, they were only of potential value. This attitude controlled Bella Coola economics in the early days of contact, and still influences their behaviour. A native store-keeper once ruefully commented on the fact that he would gain no advantage from the goods on his shelves, since he hoped merely to sell them, not to give them away.

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A man's relatives were expected to help him in the acquisition of goods, but the extent of their contributions was never

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184 standardized. Boys and girls helped their parents, and there
476 was no definite age at which they ceased to do so. The fluidity
* 556 of the Bella Coola system was contrary to any standardization.
The more important a chief became, the more did he receive from dependent relatives, but the more did they expect in the way of "return presents." It was advantageous to be generous, within the family circle as well as without, since life was so public that every transaction even of a "private" nature, was well known. Unquestionably, a greedy and strong-minded individual must frequently have taken advantage of help from his housemates, but there was no strict code of ethics in regard to this. In brief, it may be said that the acquisition of wealth was an unstandardized, individual, matter; its distribution was likewise according to individual volition, although within a rigidly defined tribal pattern.

Susaok Society

551 The ancestral names that chiefs desire to raise to a position
* 556 of eminence are usually embodied in myths dealing with the
first settlement of this earth, names which belong, as has been
575 stated, to the ancestral family. Many of these traditions
614 record other designations as well, each of which carries with it
[535] the prerogative of performing a type of dance known as *susaok*.
These will be spoken of, henceforth, as *susaok* names. The
Bella Coola do not know the meaning of this term. These
[553] names, like ancestral ones, are the potential property of members
of the ancestral family, but can only be assumed when
duly validated by presents. Such an assumption follows a
553 period of seclusion in the back-room of the house. Both men
* 556 and women are eligible. A person may be secluded in this way
575 a number of times, acquiring a new *susaok* name on each occasion,
but as presents must be distributed every time, it follows
[562] that only the children or relatives of wealthy chiefs can be so
favoured. It is desirable to have the bestowal of a *susaok* name
occur at a potlatch, since guests from foreign tribes are then

present, and the fame of the initiate is thereby carried farther 553
afield than would be possible if only Bella Coola were in attendance. 556
Every individual duly secluded and given a *sısaok* 575
name feels himself ceremonially allied to others who have had
a similar experience, and they form a grouping which may be
termed the *sısaok* secret society.

The close connection between this society and chiefs is 575
obvious from the presence of names of each type in the same 622
ancestral myths. None the less, every chief, that is a person
with duly validated ancestral name and seat, is not a *sısaok*, [553]
unless he has validated a *sısaok* name for himself and undergone
the period of seclusion. Conversely, a man may be a duly
authorized member of the *sısaok* although lacking a seat and
the other marks of chieftainship. The relationship is, however,
so close that the Bella Coola think of the *sısaok* society as a
society of chiefs. *Sısaok* dances take place at potlatches and [535]
funerals, and occasionally at gatherings of less importance.
Difficulties arise at the death of a chief who has failed to use [766]
some of his goods for the acquisition of a *sısaok* name. Such a
case took place at the death of an important Bella Coola in
the summer of 1923. Theoretically, he was ignorant of *sısaok* [183]
rites, but after much discussion these were used on account of
his importance as a *numitl* chief, an instance of the manner in
which a man's personal importance over-rules ceremonial
dictates.

The Bella Coola believe that only some of their *sısaok* 424
name-prerogatives came to this earth at the beginning of time
with their first ancestors, and that many more have been acquired 551
later by supernatural experiences. These were especially 575
common among their forbears as they ranged over this earth 773
seeking places to settle in the beginning of time. No *sısaok*
name can be assumed casually; each must have had a
specific origin. There are few *sısaok* origin myths, though
theoretically there should be one to account for every name. [177]
The explanation appears to lie in the undoubted fact that many
sısaok prerogatives have been acquired comparatively recently

177 424 551 575 [773] from the Bella Bella, a fact emphasized by all. It is not difficult to understand, therefore, why elaborate myths are lacking, even if such were possessed by the Bella Bella. The Bella Coola possessed certain similar rites to which the Bella Bella prerogatives were in the process of being grafted at the time of the coming of the white man. There has since been general decay of ceremonial life, with the result that the whole situation is in a state of flux presenting great difficulties to the investigator.

428 551 575 *Sısaok* names are willed and inherited in the manner already described for other prerogatives. The type of dance, and the time of use, will be described in the following section of this chapter.

The Potlatch

*556 128 It is unfortunate that an adequate treatment of Rank among the Bella Coola requires a description of the potlatch since this ceremony, or rather group of ceremonies, includes a number of features which, logically, should have been postponed until a later stage of this monograph. An effort has been made to lessen references to non-ritualistic features by the description, just given, of the basic concepts of chieftainship and the *sısaok* society. Other ideas will require rather lengthy digressions, a method of presentation which seems preferable to the use of many foot-notes, its only alternative.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

104 *556 [431] In scientific and popular writings alike, the term "potlatch" has been applied both to the public giving of presents, and to the rites at which this occurs. But among the Bella Coola, such distribution of gifts is necessary at every ceremonial; accordingly, each is essentially a potlatch. There is one, however, which the inhabitants regard as the most important of all, the goal which every ambitious man aims to reach, the rite in which his ancestral myth can be displayed. In this

monograph the term "potlatch" will be limited to this, the *hm*. 552 * [104]

Every Bella Coola is, or should be, able to recount how, in the beginning of time, the supreme god, *Älquntäm*, caused his 556 * ancestors to be created in his house in the land above, whence 773 they were sent down to populate the earth. A creation legend of this type is a man's most treasured possession.[4] Most myths [424] describe the adventures of these first people, how they prospered in the Bella Coola country until they were able to invite to their homes guests from far and near, to whom they showed what they had achieved, through the assistance of *Älquntäm*, or of some other supernatural being. In so doing they were carrying out *Älquntäm*'s wishes. He told some of these first people that if they accumulated much wealth, in those days chiefly food, there was danger that the provisions first stored would rot, hence they should cut away the bottom of the pile *and present it to other men and women. The Bella Coola term* for "to cut out that which is rotten" is *ldl*, hence the origin, [192] according to their belief, of the word *hm*, which thus has the significance of "a giving away of long accumulated goods which otherwise might rot."

By the splendour of his gifts each of the first people able to give a potlatch (*hm*), spread the knowledge of his name and fame to the towns whence his guests had assembled. Further, those who had received dances from *Älquntäm* were able to demonstrate them. In course of time those who had first given potlatches died, but on taking their fathers' names, the sons, or other descendants, endeavoured to uphold the parental [574] tradition by inviting guests from afar and giving them valuable presents. At such a ceremony the family history, or family myth, was recounted, so that the donor of a potlatch not only increased his own prestige, he incorporated therewith the traditions of his parent. This is the essence of the potlatch as carried out today.[5]

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[4] Examples of these are given in vol. I, chap. vi.

[5] It has been found convenient to use the present tense throughout, although the potlatch is not now carried out in its entirety. [104]

556 Although guests from different tribes are sometimes invited
574 to other ceremonials, it is at potlatches that they are essential.
Since the validity of such transactions as marriages, divorces,
[illegible] or the assumption of professional prerogatives depends on the
presence of witnesses, and since the importance of such a rite
depends on the number of witnesses, a man is always eager to
carry out any public performance at a potlatch when he is sure
of the attention of foreigners, and the consequent wider diffusion
of knowledge of what he has done. The man who has
invited guests is usually willing to allow others to perform at
his potlatch, since it increases the complexity and importance
[184] of the affair. It follows that no two potlatches are alike; one
will contain features entirely lacking in another. Moreover,
the wealth of the donor determines how many rites he himself
will cause to be performed. The fundamental concept of the
potlatch is the inviting of guests from abroad to witness rites
[769] in connection with an ancestral myth, especially the return of
a recently deceased relative of the donor to visit the living.

556 At any important potlatch the following rites are carried
796 out, and in the account of the ritual it will be assumed that
these alone are taking place. If the reader bears this summary
in mind, he is less likely to be confused by the complication of
rites.

(1) The return of a dead ancestor to visit the living.

(2) The initiation of young men or women into the *sisaok*
[575] society. This includes the validation of a *sisaok* name for each,
[553] and a period of seclusion in the back-room. The initiates may
either be relatives of the donor of the potlatch, or young persons
whose relatives are taking the opportunity to carry out the
rite in the presence of foreigners. Some of the initiates may
already be members of the society, undergoing a further period
of seclusion in order to increase their status by a further distribution
of presents.

[554] (3) The payment by the wife of the donor and her family
[858] of goods to "rebuy" her from her husband. This is a legal
fiction, though necessary to maintain the status of the children.
[589]

(4) The strengthening of the donor's seat. 556*

(5) The strengthening, or initial establishment, of seats for a number of young relatives of the donor who may, or may not, be those who are being initiated into the *susaok* society. Other youths may also be established on seats by their relatives. 796

The duration of a potlatch varies with the number of rites being performed. The preliminaries, including the beginning of seclusion for *susaok* initiates, requires at least several weeks, in some cases months. There is further delay of a week or more after the arrival of the first guests, as only when the last party has arrived can the actual potlatch begin. This can then be completed in three days and nights, although if many initiates are performing their *susaok* dances, a longer time is required.

What are the consequences of giving a potlatch?

In the first place the donor spreads the fame of his name far and wide, also the myth with which it is incorporated. Thus he increases the renown of his ancestors, a source of intense pride and gratification. 556*

More important even than this, it elevates the donor himself. With the proper carrying out of the complicated ritual and the knowledge that his name is now known among different tribes, a man experiences a feeling of mental superiority which enables him to take a leading part in the affairs of his community. [156] In Bella Coola a chief (*stä́ltumx̣*) is a person whose influence is paramount owing to his success in giving potlatches.[a] 556* 622 If several chiefs in one village have given potlatches, he who has given most is generally of greatest importance, [554] although often a man of forceful character who has held, for example, five potlatches will be regarded with greater respect than one of lesser weight, even if he has given six. The whole system is exceedingly fluid, as might be expected where chieftainship depends on individual prowess. [182] In theory, the man who holds the name of the first person to occupy a village, at

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[a] Particularly if he has given four potlatches and can accordingly be described as a [illegible] chief (I, p. 173). In *susaok* songs the archaic word [illegible] is also sometimes employed for "chief."

* 556 622 the time the earth was settled, ought to be chief of that village. If he has been able to give the necessary potlatches to weight his possession of that name, the fact that he is the legal descendant of the first chief will add a certain amount to his prestige, but unless he has been able to do this his influence will be slight.

* 556 622 766 [775] Thirdly, potlatches smooth the way for the giver after death. Before the corpse of a chief is removed from the house where he has died, a speaker always announces the number of potlatches he has given and the total value of goods distributed at them. These gifts in a vague way are felt to make easy the deceased's path in the next world as they have done in the present. The feature of the potlatch, though firmly believed by some of the older people, plays a less important part in the life of the Bella Coola than might be expected.

What are the requisites for giving a potlatch?

* 556 [424] (1) Possession of an ancient myth, containing a name or names. Probably every Bella Coola has this requirement. A man's family may not be the proud owners of one of the ancestral myths dealing with the first settlement of this earth, but they will at least own some ancient myth which they can elevate by giving a potlatch. As has been said, the owner of one of the most ancient names in many cases chooses to elevate one of lesser antiquity, a course which must, perforce, be done by one who lacks an origin myth. The slight feeling of deference with which those are regarded who hold the names of the [554] first inhabitants of the earth, the mighty chiefs of old, is subordinate to the very real feeling of respect in which is held the successful giver of potlatches. The descendant of one of the first people has the potential right to chieftainship, but unless he can give potlatches he will fail to gain that eminence.

* 556 769 (2) An occasion for giving a potlatch is never lacking. It consists of a number of closely associated rites, any one of which will serve as a reason for the ceremony. The most important feature, the return of a dead ancestor or ancestors to visit the living, is available to anyone at any time. The Bella

PLATE 9

133
342
361

[P 186 (A)]

Photograph by H. I. Smith, National Museum of Canada

The site of *Qomq·ots*, with the remains of the old village

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

322
532
996

PLATE [illegible]

Photograph by H. I. Smith, National Museum of Canada

Mask of [illegible] showing his huge hat. Notice the adze marks on the planks in the background.

[p 186 (B)]

PLATE 11

142
231
291
516
622

Photograph by the author

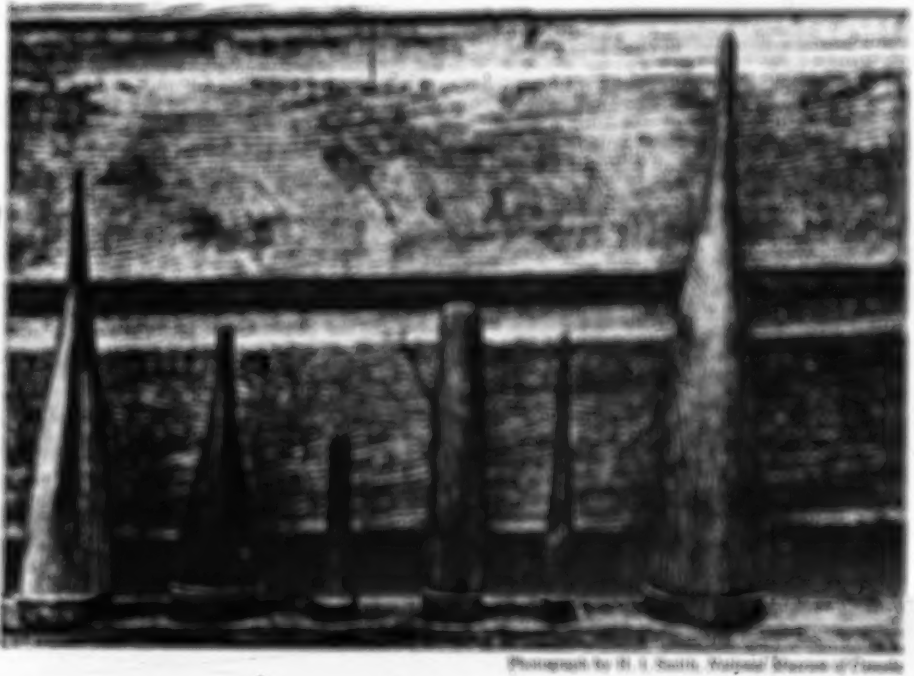
A Bella Coola couple with their dogs; the one on the left is a chief.

[p 186 (c)]

594
575

PLATE 12

[p 186(b)]

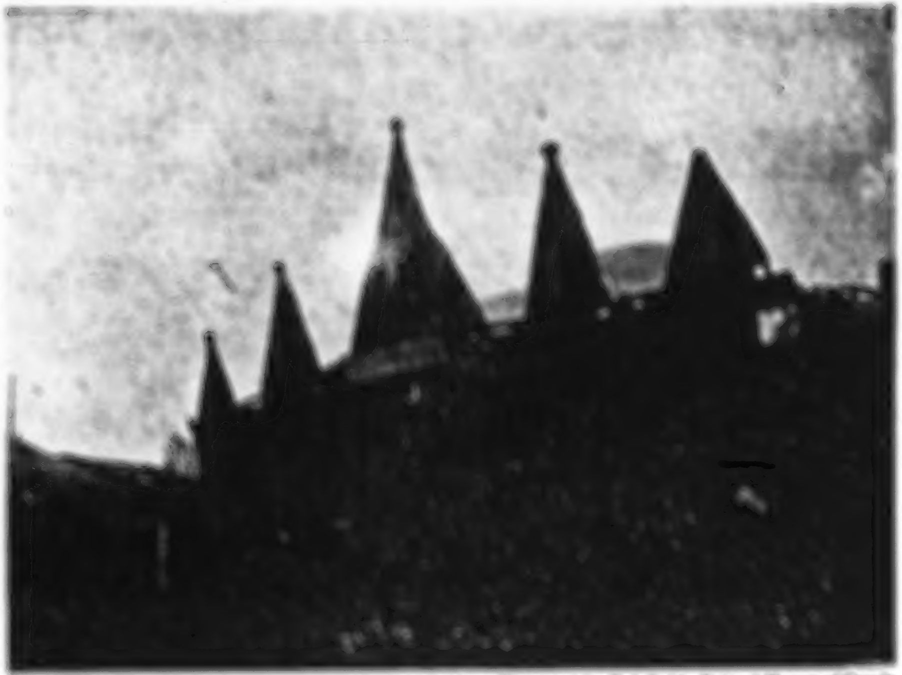


Photograph by H. I. Smith, National Museum of Canada

Sound whistles

T. F. McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NMC Bellacoola (E)

PLATE 13



Photograph by H. I. Smith, National Museum of Canada

Five-peaked house representing Mount Nusqelst.

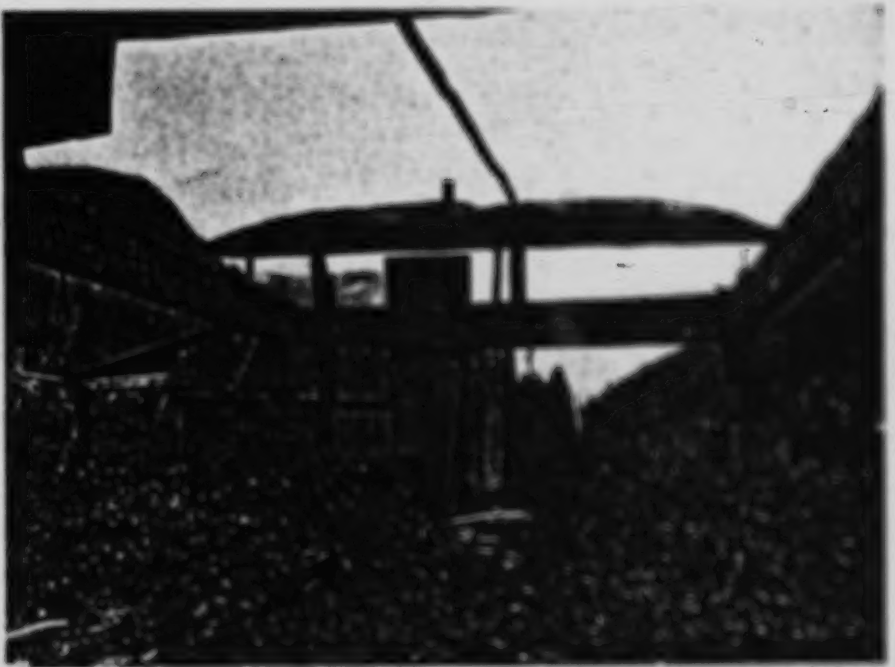
[7 186 (6)]

342
124

I:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948
NEG Bellacoola NEG

T. McIlwraith E-3 (1922-1924) 1948
[illegible] Bella Coola [illegible]

PLATE 14



Photograph by H. I. Smith, National Museum of Canada

Framework of an old house, displaying the carver's prerogative of spool-like indentations in the front posts

[⅞ 186 (F)]

Coola say that the return of the dead "washes away grief," and unquestionably it has a comforting effect on the mind of the donor of the potlatch. 556* 764

(c) Wealth. Unless a man has the necessary goods with which to make presents he cannot invite guests, no matter how important may be his ancestral myths and names. Some of this wealth he may be able to amass by his own labours, but unless he is assisted by his wife's family it is virtually impossible for him to succeed. The Bella Coola believe that a man cannot become a chief except through large payments made by a woman's family when they "rebuy" her from her husband. In other words, no man can succeed without the support of his wife. In choosing a mate a man is guided almost entirely by the ability of her family to give him financial support. In some cases an elderly couple assist a married son to give a potlatch; this custom, though considered quite proper, is not common. 476 556* 604 [573] [428] [587]

(d) Supernatural assistance. To the Bella Coola this is quite as important as the preceding. One man may work very hard but his efforts are never crowned with success, whereas another man will prosper in every venture. This is due to the supernatural attributes given by the supreme god to the latter. By prayer, ceremonial chastity, and other means, a man may increase the powers granted to him, but if these are entirely lacking, he can never hope to rise to the position of chief. 556* 787

PRELIMINARIES

In describing the potlatch, it will be convenient to refer to the donor as X, and assume him to be a middle-aged member of the [illegible] society, whose seat and name, though duly ratified, lack importance through his previous failure to give large presents. 556*

For a number of years X has prospered. He has amassed quantities of skins, blankets, tools, copper ornaments, clothing, canoes, baskets, dentalium shell, slaves, and other valuables

He is especially rich in caribou-skins, used for face covering, and goat-skins, so treasured for their wool.[illegible] He and his wife have laid up abundant food, and, most important of all, his wife's family is wealthy. Rumours have spread that X will soon give a potlatch and perhaps one or more foreign chiefs has given him a large cone-shaped whistle, such as is used in secret ritual (see Plate [illegible]). These whistles, called [illegible], are often referred to as the "breath" or "voice" of a chief; they are also called [illegible], the "heart" or "mind" of a chief; a third designation is [illegible]. X carefully conceals a whistle in one of his boxes. Such a present expresses the kindly feeling existing between those akin to one another in that they have risen to a position of eminence above the common crowd. Its receipt spurs a man to greater efforts to amass the wealth necessary for giving a potlatch by keeping before his eyes the realization of what another has done. A rival chief never gives such a present. X returns each whistle secretly at the time of his potlatch.

Early in the autumn X decides that he has almost enough wealth. To complete the essential amount he will not hesitate to borrow from his friends. It is most unusual to be refused, for it is incumbent on X, unless he wishes to lose the esteem of the community, to repay his borrowings with heavy interest, and when X distributes his goods at his potlatch it will be announced how he has obtained them, and the lender is proclaimed as a person of sufficient wealth to be able to spare some of it. Goods so loaned are termed "belt goods," a reference to the manner in which a man fastens up his cape with a belt before setting to work. The assumption is that X will have to labour to repay his indebtedness. Failure to repay is a serious matter, and the lender would be justified in seizing a canoe or other valuable article as surety for his debt; in fact, feuds are commonly caused by unpaid debts. [illegible]

[illegible]

ability are always seeking to lend goods to those who are planning potlatches or other rites, knowing that the investment is safe and lucrative. 556 [226]

X uses his own discretion as to how much wealth is necessary. He knows how much he owes for presents received on previous occasions, and would not dream of giving a potlatch until able to repay them. Failure to do so would hold him up to the derision of the whole countryside. [226] But he acts upon his own judgement with regard to increase. If he continues to hoard goods until he is able to repay with great increase, he gains prestige from his generous returns, but meanwhile he does not enjoy the distinction which would have followed a smaller affair at an earlier period. Further, there is the uncertainty about how much his wife's family will contribute, though that can be estimated with a fair degree of accuracy; in Bella Coola every transaction is made publicly, so each man knows the wealth of his neighbours. The favourite month for a potlatch is October, before the dancing season, when there is abundance of food. [706] [222] At this season there is plenty of salmon, venison, and crabapples, all of which might be ruined by frost. Occasionally, a potlatch takes place after the dancing period, but in that case the only foods available are olachen grease, smoked salmon, smoked fish, dried hemlock-bark, and dried berries. If several men in one village decide to give potlatches in the same year there may be rivalry and dispute as to which shall be first. [576] There is no satisfactory method of settling the point.

When all is ready X calls a herald (I, p. [illegible]) to summon his fellow villagers to his house the following day for [illegible]. [225] It is customary for all to accept, but no social obligation is broken should a man or woman fail to do so.

The next morning no one eats in his own house, knowing that free food will be distributed. While his expected guests are adorning themselves by washing and painting, X, aided by his family and others, prepares large quantities of food, borrows boxes, and makes other necessary arrangements. Pre- [556] [426]

Presently the guests assemble, those who are *sisauk* wearing on their heads one or more weasel skins as a mark of membership in the society. Each takes the seat to which he is entitled, the chiefs behind the fire, or on either side of it, the commoners, slaves, and foreigners in the two corners nearest the door. The heralds move to and fro between door and fire, their constant exchange of remarks adding to the general interest of the affair. It is the function of a herald to lend dignity to chiefs by the tone of his observations, but should one fail to live up to his station, the herald is privileged to comment thereon. In some respects his position approximates that of a buffoon, but as a herald always receives valuable presents, the office is sometimes accepted by ambitious young men, willing to undertake the slightly derogatory duties in return for the substantial gain.

A number of young lads, friends or relatives of X, distribute the food. It is placed in boxes; an important chief is not called upon to share with any one, whereas six or seven men of no standing may partake from one box. These receptacles, with whatever food remains in them, are taken home by the guests; otherwise the host would be insulted. Many boxes are lost in this way, a source of considerable irritation. After the first course, a second follows, consisting of a different kind of food in another box, and in some cases there is a third, and even a fourth course. A chief must never appear stingy. The more he gives, the more does his prestige increase. Also, a man who gives freely receives abundantly, so that generosity brings its reward.

Next, the father or other male relative of X's wife, or a fluent friend who speaks for him, stands up and makes a speech, extolling the fame of his own family by sketching in general outlines one of the myths of his ancestors, and announcing that X's wife is adding to her husband some portion of it. This may be the prerogative of using a spoon carved, for example, with the shape of a beaver; or a carved box, or a totem-pole with certain figures on it, or the right to use a painting of a grizzly bear on the wall of his house, or an ancestral name.

bear on the wall of his house, or an ancestral name. The speaker always recounts the whole myth before announcing which portion of it is transmitted to X as a prerogative. It is understood that this transference will be duly validated by presents to X when he gives his potlatch. Such are termed *dzámánomtum* and signify the repurchase of a wife from her husband. Though this is known to be a fiction it has extreme social importance. Unless *dzámánomtum* is paid there is an ineradicable blot upon the children; in fact, it is one of the essentials of a legal marriage. All prerogatives thus transferred on *sládstum* become the property of X and will in time pass to his children, unless recalled to the wife's family by further repurchase (*dzámánomtum*) money or goods. In this fashion elements of family myths become scattered, and one of the considerations in choosing a wife is to select a woman able to bring back some missing part of the husband's myth. 556* 425 583 [581]

The usual present is an ancestral name, which X henceforth uses at potlatches as his most distinguished title, though the myth in which it is incorporated does not belong to him. As long as the name remains in X's family those who originally owned it are unable to make use of it. Such a name is said to be "dragged across" by the wife to her husband, the immense weight or importance of the designation being compared with the dragging of a heavy log. Occasionally, the father of a married woman, animated by the kindliest feelings towards his son-in-law, may give him outright a myth with all the names embodied therein. This can happen only where there are no other survivors of the family. In such a case when the myth is recounted it must always be mentioned how it has been obtained. The number and type of the prerogatives transferred depend upon the sentiments with which his wife's family regard X. If, in addition to being a worthy man, he is member of their ancestral family, or of one with which his wife's has frequently intermarried, so that in course of generations prerogatives have intermingled, there is less objection to giving him such rights than if he were an unrelated individual. [553] [551] 556* 425 606 553

553 556 425 [604] [592] A man may receive so many prerogatives with regard to house painting that he has to continue the designs on the sides of his dwelling, or he may receive so many figures for a totem-pole that he can erect one of composite pattern. X may acquire prerogatives not only from his father-in-law, but from his mother-in-law, and if he is the husband of several wives, the family of each may contribute something. If, for some inexplicable reason, X is not given any prerogative from the family of his wife, he uses one of his own ancestral myths with the names belonging thereto. A man who gives many potlatches can choose to validate numerous family names for himself, or to concentrate on one alone, elevating it to a position of great importance. But any names he validates must belong to his [615] family; it is contrary to custom for a Bella Coola to steal a name to which he has no right.

556 782 At this, or some other suitable time, X prays for assistance in the complicated rites that are to follow. Taking four pieces of pounded and dyed cedar-bark, and four pieces of undyed bark, he places on each a small quantity of food and throws the eight into the fire. Likewise he may throw in four small pieces of any kind of goods. As he does so he appeals to the supreme god:

"Please strengthen my spirit for the many duties which are before me."

[756] Instead of praying himself, X may ask a shaman to do so for him, in the belief that the latter's supplication will be more efficacious.

556 688 628 The necessity for supernatural assistance lies in the fact that any serious error or disaster in the performance of potlatch rites calls for summary punishment, since X has allowed ceremonial sacred knowledge to reach the uninitiated. In such a case the duty of meting out a penalty falls upon the members of a foreign tribe. Nothing is said at the time, but the departing guests take away with them information of what has happened. Great latitude is allowed as to who shall be the chastisers. The guests may be related to X and the members

of his village, hence they will not feel it incumbent upon them 556*
to intervene. But news travels, and in course of time the 688
sisaok members of some other tribe will decide to send a raiding 628
party against X's village. All informants agreed most emphatically that this custom prevailed among the coast people from the Tsimshian country to Alert Bay, but specific examples could not be obtained. The Bella Coola regard such a raid as the proper course to pursue, and belligerent tribes may have used an irregularity in the potlatch rites as an excuse for an assault. It is clear, however, that this custom never attained such prominence that it could be called a law.

The following is an instance of the Bella Coola outlook on 556*
the question: 688

> The father of an informant had had such success in giving potlatches that his neighbours were jealous. On one occasion he prepared a representation of a whale, an elaborate wooden frame, fifteen feet long, operated by men concealed within and carrying passengers; this was a figure which entered into his ancestral myth. One of the carpenters who made it, bribed by a jealous rival of the donor of the potlatch, arranged that the lower jaw of the whale should fall to the floor during the proceedings. This revealed the mechanism of the structure. White influence on the coast prevented an incursion of foreign raiders, but according to this informant, the chiefs determined that his father should die, and they employed a sorcerer for this purpose. His father and eleven other relatives died soon afterwards. This man, the sole survivor, ascribes his escape to his adoption of Christianity. [578] [532] [578] [177] [754]
>
> Another instance of the penalty which follows errors in potlatch ritual occurred a few years ago, when a number of young men used the cone-shaped whistles openly, as if they had been toys. The presence of the white man prevented any open steps towards punishment, but before long all the youths died. No one knows what caused their deaths, though probably they were due to an expert in black magic acting on the instructions of a senior *sisaok*. [554] [177] [754]

After the prayer, X and his family give more food to their 556*
guests, whose boxes containing what they are to carry away are increasing in number. By his lavishness, X increases his prestige in the eyes of his fellow-villagers.

If he can afford to build a new house embodying the form [336]

335 of one in his ancestral myth, he will do so; if not, it will suffice
*556 to decorate the old house; but in either case the tasks connected with the construction must be allotted. X gives to one man the work of making new beams; to another, the two front upright posts; to a third, the two rear upright posts; to another, the planks along one side of the house; to a skilled carpenter, the totem-pole bearing whatever design X has decided upon; to a painter, one of the designs for the back wall of the house; to another painter, another design near it; to still another, part of the painting of the front of the house; to another, more of the same; and so on until he has allotted work for every part of the edifice. In some cases there are
342 peculiarities of house construction dependent upon their occur-
424 rence in the builder's ancestral myth, which are jealously
*556 guarded prerogatives. One man, for instance, enjoys the right
[773] to build five peaks above the front of his house. These represent the five peaks of Mount *Nusqalst* where his first ancestor came to earth (see Plate 13). Another has a series of spool- or disk-like indentations in his upright posts (see Plate 14) to support the beams, a prerogative established by his ancestor *Qoi* in the beginning of time. Another chief's posts are carved to represent a mythical creature. Still another prerogative is that of building a sloping board, resembling a gang-plank, from the door of the house to the ground, with a representation of a mythological sea monster at the bottom. In that case the theme of the grandiloquent potlatch song is how chiefs are attracted to X's house, as canoes are irresistibly drawn to the sea monster.

Each of the above-mentioned prerogatives belongs to one family alone; whereas several have the right to build semi-subterranean houses. The artisans excavate a rectangular hole, about six feet deep, equal in size to the central part of the dwelling. A platform is then erected round the sides of this, about three feet from the bottom. The walls of the house itself are raised sufficiently far back from the central pit to allow an unencumbered passageway, off which the bedrooms

1: McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948

NE5 Bellacoola NE6

are built. The central fire is laid in the bottom of the pit, a 342
few feet above that is the platform where the guests are seated, 424
and the ground-level is a few feet above that again. A few 556*
instances are remembered of houses having been built with
two, and even three, of these tiers, or platforms. In those [177]
cases it appears certain that this type of construction was embodied in a myth derived from Bella Bella or Rivers Inlet people, where, according to the Bella Coola, large houses, of five or six tiers, were not unknown.

X uses his own discretion in choosing his workmen,§ avoid- 335
ing only his own relatives and those of his wife. The question 556*
of pay is never broached, but it is understood that X will
recompense those who have worked for him. The scale on 465
which he does so will depend entirely on his generosity. This is one of the ways in which a chief helps the poor people of his village. More food is distributed to "sharpen the wedges."

While a man is engaged on his allotted task any food or other articles which he or his family may obtain belongs to X. If a man who hews the planks takes his wife with him and she chances to pick berries while he is at work, these must be given to X who will distribute them with his other food at the potlatch, and it will be announced from whom he has received them. If a man's friends should help him to complete his task and then all go hunting, any skins acquired will belong to X; but when he repays his indebtedness he is expected to reward the worker, not only for his carpentry, but also for the berries or pelts. As X must give lavishly to prove his chieflike generosity, the collection of foods or skins by his workmen is profitable for them.

The guests have been passing in and out of X's house all 556*
day and towards dusk all again assemble within. Suddenly
the door is burst open by a number of young men carrying a
large log, like a battering-ram. The majority of the bearers [575]
are sisaok, though they may obtain assistance from those who are not members of the society. The people within the house spring up to eject the ram, and a sham battle ensues. Back-

§ [i.e. to build a new house for a potlatch.
—Analyst]

*556 wards and forwards sway the contestants with shouting and merriment, and those who have failed to carry away their boxes of food hasten to remove them out of the danger zone. It is a time of licence, and even one of the most influential chiefs may be struck by the ram or his food scattered without consideration. The ram is driven back, but those who bear it steer the log so that instead of passing out through the door it strikes the front wall, shattering some of the boards with their old paintings. With a shout they drive forwards again until part of the wall at the back of the house is likewise destroyed. Then those within the house gain the mastery and the log is carried outside, dragging its struggling bearers with it. They drop the log and return inside as if nothing untoward had occurred. This destruction of the house walls is a necessary preparation for their replacement with new paintings on new boards. When quiet has been restored a herald stands up.

"Listen!" he cries. "Ye chiefs, ye wives of chiefs, and ye commoners, soon we shall hear the supernatural beings."

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*556

Then the singers[1] beat out the tune of any *kusiut*. He whose song it is begins to dance, using the type of which he has the prerogative, but as the supernatural being with whom he has a ceremonial affinity is not present, the dance is not considered sacred. As soon as one *kusiut* has finished, the tune of another is beaten, and he too dances. The singers change from *kusiut* to *kusiut*, and please themselves about the order in which they shall dance, also about how many shall perform. This continues until late in the night. Then they beat out a *sisaok* tune and the member of that society to whom it belongs performs his dance, a non-sacred affair, like those of the *kusiut*. One after another dances as his or her tune is beaten out, until dawn approaches. Meanwhile several *sisaok* have been sent outside

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[104]

[1] Henceforth in this monograph the term "singer" will be used as a translation of the Bella Coola word, [illegible]. The singers sit together behind the fire. It is their duty to remember the tune and text of every song, to beat out this tune for every dancer and to accompany him by singing the words of his song.

with a number of the large cone-shaped whistles used for *sisaok* ceremonial. Towards dawn, sounds come from these, and sometimes a dull thump is heard on the roof, as if a heavy being had landed there. At once there is great excitement within the house. The voices of supernatural people prove them to be at hand. No one is allowed to leave except a *sisaok siki*[9] who is skilled in dealing with *Malakila*,[10] also called *Sixsinqutnam*, the supernatural being closely connected with the *sisaok* ritual. Those within can hear the voice of the *siki* raised as if he were speaking to someone at a distance. 533 575 556* [781] [776]

"Chief, you have come too early," he says. "The house is not yet ready. Please return later."

He is answered by loud whistling, which grows fainter, as if the being who made it were moving away. In reality the young men are merely blowing less forcibly into the whistles.

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[9] The accounts of all informants agree that much of the *sisaok* ritual was newly imported into Bella Coola from Bella Bella. According to some statements, *Potlas*, a Bella Coola chief who died between 1870 and 1880, married a Bella Bella wife, also one from Rivers Inlet, and it was these two women who brought with them as dower certain *sisaok* prerogatives. It is said that previous to that time the Bella Coola did not understand the use of the large cone-shaped whistles, nor were they able to summon the supernatural beings to the youths secluded in the back-room, nor to dispel the beings at the conclusion of the rites. On the other hand, some Bella Coola claim that their first ancestors brought the whistles with them from the land above. It is probable that the calling in of the supernatural beings is a recent addition to the potlatch, which accounts for the contradictory accounts, but whether or not the whistles are a new feature is more doubtful. It appears certain that the prerogative of *siki* has recently been obtained from the Bella Bella. *Siki* means "the one who cures," and the name is given to the man whose prerogative it is to tend the *kusiut* initiates in whom supernatural powers are located. In Bella Bella there is a similar functionary for *sisaok* matters, known as a *hai'alikila*. Through intermarriage several Bella Coola have recently obtained this prerogative; in each case it is frankly stated that it has been derived from the Bella Bella. The Bella Coola apply to them, as honoured, the term *siki*, as they do for the *kusiut* "curer," though the Bella Bella name, *hai'alikila*, is used with equal frequency. The present *siki* have endeavoured to claim for themselves certain ceremonial functions formerly carried out by any *sisaok*. In this account of a potlatch it is assumed that a *siki* is functioning on all occasions, but in many cases any senior *sisaok* is considered sufficiently close to the supernatural beings to act satisfactorily. Until about 1870 it is clear that any *sisaok* was regarded as capable of doing so. 177 424 533 575 556* [425] [589] [523] [791]

[10] Knowledge of this being is said to have been acquired by the marriage of a certain *ancestor* of Kimsquit to a Bella Bella woman in the beginning of time. [177]

* 552 [575 781] The *siki* returns to the house and tells the guests that *Malakila* has indeed been near and has promised to return later on. Those who are not *kusiut*, being steeped in the belief concerning the omnipresence of supernatural beings and ignorant of the carefully concealed whistles, readily credit the tale that they have heard the voice of a denizen of the land above, whose language is intelligible to the *siki*. Thus is the supernatural element of the potlatch first called forth.

After a final distribution of food, the guests return to their homes.

THE INITIATION OF *kusiut* NEOPHYTES

* 556 575 [609] At a potlatch valuable presents are given to the foreign guests, but it is unthinkable for the donor to give to his fellow-villagers. Accordingly, if X desires to display his generosity towards them, he does so at a preliminary ceremony, when he begins the initiation, or re-initiation, into the *kusiut* society of any number of young people. After elaborate counting and re-counting of his goods, both those actually stored in his house and those promised,[*] X decides that he has sufficient to initiate, for example, seven neophytes. His first choice will be his own children, failing these, the sons and daughters of a brother or sister, or of his wife's relatives, or, if none of these are available, those of a friend. X does not gain any pecuniary advantage from such a transaction, in fact he loses, but the prestige attached outweighs this consideration.

"Is it not the privilege of a chief to be generous?" say the Bella Coola.

[553] He approaches the parents of those whom he has selected, always members of old-established families. As it is to the social advantage of a young person to be a *kusiut*, a father usually tells X a *kusiut* name, dormant in his family, which he wishes to have conferred on his son, and how much he is willing to contribute for the purpose. In many cases, a man will

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[426] [*] In spite of the care exercised, mistakes are frequent, giving rise to hurried borrowings from friends to make up the necessary amount.

request X to have his son initiated, promising him financial assistance. 556* 575

These preliminaries have probably been commenced before midwinter; at any rate they are completed as soon as possible, so that a few nights later X is able to instruct a herald to invite the *sisaok* to his house. The singers are in attendance. The father, or other relative, of one of those about to be received [537] into the ranks of the *sisaok*, expounds in general terms the ancestral myth containing the name to be conferred, or will ask a fluent speaker to deputize for him. Another follows, until myths have been recited for all. The singers listen attentively, knowing that without further instruction they are expected to compose two songs for each person, embodying a few salient points in the myth, without exposing the details. 593 556* 575 In point of fact, the singers have probably heard the myth on previous occasions. After a distribution of food, provided by X, the people disperse.

For several days the singers work at the songs. The principles governing their composition are identical for all types. At night, as he walks in the forest, or at any other time, a singer constantly tries to compose a tune. Others do the same, and at intervals they meet, either in some lonely spot or in the back-room of a house. Each singer who has composed a tune beats out its time, humming as he does so; then another gives his tune, and perhaps a third. After much discussion, which in some cases becomes acrimonious, it is decided what two tunes are the best for so-and-so. Words are then supplied, a matter of less difficulty, all the singers assisting. In this way the fourteen songs required are provided. When ready, one of the singers informs X of the fact.

X decides that on a certain night two of the initiates shall begin a period of confinement in the back-room of his house. This information is passed round in secret by the *sisaok*, and the initiate, whom it will be convenient to refer to as Y., is duly warned. At dusk a reliable *sisaok* is sent out to the woods behind the village with one of the large cone-shaped whistles.

533 This is presently heard. Y may be in his own house, but at
*556 once any number of *cusiut* rush in and conduct him, concealed
575 in their midst, to the back-room of X's dwelling. All the *cusiut* of the village begin to gather there; those who are not members of the society are also free to enter the main part of the house, though they cannot take any part in the proceedings. [781] They lurk near the door, watching with interest mixed with fear, and ready to flee if the danger from supernatural beings seems too acute.

After some delay, a whistle is heard at intervals, gradually becoming louder as if the supernatural being, of which it is the voice, were coming nearer. Presently it sounds immediately outside the door, and a *citi* rushes forth. He returns in a moment, followed, amid the breathless excitement of the uninitiated, [554] by a figure masked as a bird or animal. The design represents Y's crest, or some creature with which one of his ancestors came in contact, and which is therefore regarded as having the same sociological importance. A member of the society has carved the mask, another wears it, but this the uninitiated do not know.

[776] "It is a [illegible],"[18] they gasp.

The figure crosses the floor and bends down beside the singers to whom it appears to be whispering. Presently they begin, softly, to tap out a song in rapid time as if the supernatural visitor had just taught it to them. It is divided into two or three parts and the theme is taken from Y's ancestral myth.* After two or three rehearsals, the singers beat out the time more loudly and accompany it with their voices, while [535] the masked figure dances. A number of older *cusiut* accompany the performer as he whirls around the house; it is pretended that this is necessary to shield the spectators, though the real function is to guide the dancer whose sight is hamper-

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[18] Meaning, "What is [illegible]," or, "A [illegible]."

*If the neophyte is a son or other near relative of the chief who is giving the potlatch, the theme may consist of [illegible] references to the goods about to be distributed. This is [illegible] the [illegible] of the performer as a result of the actual ceremony.

533
capped by the mask. If the *tatsinam* represents Wasp[*] or 556 *
Grizzly Bear, he does not make a circuit and a fluent *noanë* 575
explains that to do so would be unsafe owing to the ferocity of these animals. When the song is ended, the figure passes into the back-room. After a short interval it reappears, [535] recrosses the house, and leaves by the front door, to the accompaniment of increased whistling.

A few myths embody two *tatsinam*. In this case, a second figure presently enters and the same ritual is repeated for a second song. This usually differs, musically, from the first, being in three parts and with even more rapid time. More often, the second song is merely beaten out by the singers without the appearance of a *tatsinam* to supply an obvious source.

This is the normal, but not the only practice with regard 556 *
to a *tatsinam*. In some cases the figure does not appear until 575
after the singing of the first song, and the uninitiated are told that it has been attracted by the music. In this case it passes into the back-room, later to reappear and leave by the front door. An announcement is made that it has brought a strange power, that Y has become peculiar, and that his name is now, for example, *Ƣnaqmacila*. A herald bears this news through the village. A second song is then sung in due course.

The *tatsinam* is difficult to classify among Bella Coola [776] supernatural beings. It appears in the form of an ancestral crest, but the *noanë* do not seem to have taught the uninitiated to regard it as Y's actual forefather. It remains as a supernatural embodiment of his crest, a materialization of an element of family history, and a motive for the use by Y of a mask representing the apparition. The uninitiated do not seek further; they have seen a wonderful sight and are content.

Several of the older *noanë* stated that the *tatsinam* concept [777 776] was not indigenous to Bella Coola; it had been recently

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[*] Some of the first people came to earth as Wasps, but several received so much help from these insects that they are regarded as crests by the descendants of those whom they assisted. [778 825]

* 556 adopted, probably as a prerogative obtained through marriage, from the Bella Bella or Rivers Inlet people. The diversity in ritual supports this view. There was not sufficient time for the procedure to become stabilized between the introduction of the concept and the dislocation of Bella Coola social life through the influence of the white man. It is also possible that the [illegible] was added to *kusiut* rites from the older [illegible] society (I, p. 275).

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[177]
[176]

538 Whatever may have been the history of the [illegible], it provides Y with a mask, or with two, if two figures have appeared. He guards them jealously, though secretly, throughout his life and uses them only on rare ceremonial occasions. It is one of these masks which will be brought out if one of his family gives a dramatic representation of his return after death. A mask of this type is sometimes willed, but the legatee alters the design before using it.

* 556
575
[769]
[428]

* 556 A short pause follows the singing of the second, or third, song, during which some chief or chiefs may make a laudatory speech concerning Y's family history. Then the singers again sing the first song, and *kusiut* members of the audience join in. Similarly, the second song is practised. These two are sung, time after time, until the *kusiut* have thoroughly mastered them. When the singers consider that this has been accomplished, they tell X, who communicates with the *kusiut* man outside who has the whistle, and again its eerie notes are heard. Some of the uninitiated, believing that the supernatural being who gives potency to the ritual is at hand, hurriedly leave in fear. At the same time some of the *kusiut* conduct to the back-room the second initiate whose songs are to be sung that night. The procedure in his case is identical with that described for Y. Usually it is considered sufficient to initiate two on one night, though three may be attempted. When the songs of the last have been sung, food is distributed and the people disperse.

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[537]
[533]
[781]

A few nights later the same ritual is repeated for two more initiates, who join their predecessors in the back-room. There they spend their time in idleness, the only essential being the preservation of an air of mystery by keeping out of sight of those who are not sisaok. Food is brought to them, and members of the society are free to enter the room at any time. Some of the older ones enlighten Y and his fellows with regard to the secret rites, and especially to the human origin of the whistle. Proud of his new status, an initiate never dreams of transmitting this information to those who are not members of the society. As a privilege, the neophytes are sometimes allowed to go out at night, care being taken that no uninitiated person shall see them. The length of the period of confinement varies according to the number of young people to be admitted, and on the actual time of the potlatch; the minimum duration is about two weeks, the maximum, four months. Sometimes the tediousness is lightened by the arrival of carpenters who have chosen this secret place to work at the sisaok masks. After all the initiates have been confined to the back room, X continues to invite people to his house at frequent intervals to practise their songs. On each occasion food is distributed, so that the meetings are expensive to the host, but no donor grumbles about it, as thereby he establishes his prestige as a chief. 554 575 * [556]

THE VALIDATION OF *SISAOK* NAMES

The next event is the validation of the initiates' sisaok names,* a ceremony termed sx'andilim. X, with the assistance of his family, piles on the floor of his house the goods which he intends to use for this purpose. In the old days these consisted of skins, blankets, food, baskets, boxes, slaves (symbolized by stones), canoes (symbolized by sticks), and so on. Nowadays, money is used. Towards dusk a herald summons the people to X's house. For many years it has been customary to invite everyone, but it is said that long ago only the sisaok would have been present. When all are seated, 553 556 * 575 [203] [537]

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*Validation of the neophytes' names is essential to the potlatch itself, but chiefs endeavour to display their wealth and generosity to their fellow villagers at each. Consequently, though donors are eager to perform this rite, it can be omitted entirely without affecting the potlatch.

553 without special places, X calls upon some eloquent friend to
* 556 direct the distribution of the money. This speaker orates how
575 X is carrying out the rites incumbent on his noble and exalted
[537] station, how all honour him for so doing, and how all should strive to follow his example. He then says that to give strength to the name *[illegible]*, for example, X will give away, say $100. He further announces who have contributed this amount: perhaps $50 from X, and the other half from various relatives of Y. If the sum in question be large it is always mentioned from whom, and how the donor has obtained the money. Thus every financial transaction becomes publicly known, and the more prominently a man figures, the greater is his prestige. Next, the amount to be used for the second initiate's name is announced, with the same details, and in like fashion the sums decided upon for each successive initiate.

Then the total amount is distributed among the guests by the heralds, under X's supervision. He usually gives everyone the same amount; men sometimes receive more than [562] women, but in every case members of the same sex receive an equal sum. The Bella Coola are not expert mathematicians, [803] so that faulty division is the rule. If X, for example, decides to give $1.50 to each person present, it is a time of considerable anxiety while the stack of bills is being reduced, to watch whether or not there will be the exact amount. If X finds out [426] he is short he will hastily borrow some money, as it would be an insult to omit anyone. If the amount be too great, he will [576] use the surplus in making presents to the more influential guests.

With the exception of this possible surplus, the money distributed is regarded as an outright present; "it has flowed away to make good the boys' names" is the Bella Coola expression. A chief will remember how much he has received, and if he wishes to uphold or to increase his own dignity, he will make a point of returning at least an equivalent to X on some future occasion. But though in effect he may make return, such is never said to be the case. "The money has flowed away."

Poor people, white guests, or others from whom no return can 553
possibly be received, share equally in the distribution; the 556 *
money goes to all to validate the transaction. On the other
hand, X expects that the presents, if any, made to a few indi- 575
viduals after the general distribution, will be returned with interest. In selecting the recipients of these he has been animated, first, by the necessity of repaying old debts, and secondly by his desire to make good investments in the shape of presents to those likely to show their chiefly nature by returning with heavy interest. No request is ever made for such
repayment, but as the transaction has been publicly an- [558]
nounced, a man fears to fail to repay, since that would lower his prestige. No one may refuse a present, no matter how embarrassing it may be.

After the gifts have been distributed the songs of the [533]
initiates are practised. Members of the *nɑɑnɑ* society join in with the singers; the other spectators listen attentively, full of interest, but take no part. X with his helpers then gives food to all, and they depart.

Before the coming of the white man a potlatch was a rare 535
event, and *nɑɑnɑ* members were initiated at local gatherings. 556 *
The period of confinement was the same as that just described, 575
but instead of merely practising the songs during the interval,
the initiates appeared and danced to them. It will be con- 177
venient here to describe that ritual, emphasizing the fact that at a potlatch, when the initiates can be confirmed in the presence of foreign guests, this preliminary rite does not take place.

After the distribution of goods the singers beat out[*] the 292
tune of any one of the initiates, and all emerge in close suc-
cession from the back-room, each wearing a blanket, without 595
distinctive design, a collar of dyed and pounded cedar-bark 556 *
decorated with pendant weasel skins, and the distinctive *nɑɑnɑ* 575
head-dress (see Plate 15).‡ This consists of a circlet of grizzly
bear claws, surmounted in front by a small forehead mask; from 237
the inner side of the circlet there rise a number of sea-lion

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[*] The present tense is used for uniformity.

‡[See pl. 116, facing p 218 - ANALYST]

292 whiskers over which is scattered eagle down. From the back
of the head-dress hang weasel skins. In Bella Bella it is said to
535 be customary for a skin to be added on every occasion when a
* 556 *susak* is confined to the back-room. This may happen as many
575 as fifteen times to the child of wealthy parents, and a few Bella
Coola have adopted the practice of marking each with a skin.
[237] Usually, some six or nine are hung in two tiers, without consideration of the number of times the wearer has been in seclusion. The central figure of the forehead mask is a head with
[532] a hooked nose, the recurved hook being joined to the face
itself. This figure does not vary with the wearer's ancestral
myth, and no one knows what it represents. This design is
[177] said to have been introduced to Bella Coola from the north a
few generations ago; before that time the head-dress consisted
[237] of a circular band of dyed cedar-bark, decorated with the tail
[824] feathers of one of the large woodpeckers. The Bella Coola call
it simply, "forehead mask." Each initiate carries a hollow
[532] rattle, carved in the shape of a bird, which he holds in his right
[534] hand, belly uppermost. Long, long ago, when a dancer failed
to do so, the rattle became alive and the bird flew away; hence,
this rule has been obeyed ever since.

535 Each initiate takes up his station in some part of the house
* 556 behind the fire and dances to the beating of the sticks. The
575 left hand of each is clasped behind his back and in his right he
holds the rattle and keeps it in constant motion by shaking his
wrist. Ability to do this is one of the marks of a good dancer.
Keeping the body stiff and the legs close together, he rises with
slight jumps, barely altering his position on the floor. Sometimes he slowly turns around sunwise[17] in his series of jumps,
at other times he does not alter his position. The head is bent
from side to side and downwards at each jump, causing the
eagle down to fly in all directions. *Susak* assistants blow more
of the material on to the head-dress at intervals (see Plate 16).¼

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[821]
[796]
[17] The Bella Coola believe that the sun moves from east to south to west to north. Many ceremonial movements follow this direction, which will henceforth be described as sunwise.

¼ [See cat 116, facing p 219 - ANALYST]

As the dancers proceed, those women who have the prerogative for doing so, utter a peculiar droning cry. After dancing, the initiates return to the back-room, where they doff their attire. The ceremony concludes with the distribution of food. 535 556 575 [424]

The initiates are now free to leave their place of concealment, as each has become a legal member of the sacred society. Some young men, sons of influential chiefs, are secluded a number of times, others but once. The oftener a youth is secluded, the greater is his prestige, because goods must be distributed on each occasion to validate his name. [554] At the present time, there is considerable uncertainty about the exact details of the ceremony, for it has been so easy of late years to give potlatches that the simpler rite has fallen into disuse; some informants state that each initiate should emerge alone and dance by himself. This concludes the shorter ceremony, but with a potlatch the dancing is reserved until the coming of the foreign guests.

DELIVERING OF INVITATIONS

Returning now to preparations for the true potlatch, it does not matter whether the ceremonies already described are carried out before or after the departure of messengers to invite guests from abroad. 556 [202] Although X usually consults his relatives and friends as to whom he shall invite, this is entirely optional. In giving his invitations X is actuated, first, by a desire to summon those from whom he has previously received hospitality; having accepted presents from them he must discharge the obligations or sink in social estimation. [558] Considerations of friendship also enter into his selection, and he will likewise invite anyone whom he wishes to put to shame by a lavish display of wealth. It is taken as a matter of course that each guest will be accompanied by a number of followers, members of his family, slaves, or adherents.

Acting on X's instructions, a herald invites the people of his village to X's house. X stands up and announces to them [202] [574]

[illegible] that he wants messengers, giving the name of a chief, to go, for
[illegible] instance, to Bella Bella, to invite a certain person, whose name
[illegible] he gives, to the potlatch. X likewise names those whom he
[illegible] wishes to form the escort. As a sacred whistle is used, it is
essential either that the chief himself be a senior kusiut, or that
[illegible] a kusiut go with him. It is immaterial whether or not all of the crew are members of the society. Nobody is compelled to go, but as all know it will be a matter of pride to X to recompense them, none declines except for some strong reason. X names those whom he wishes to proceed to other tribes, sending one canoe to each group of towns. He arranges their departure according to the distance each must travel, the aim being to have all the guests arrive at Bella Coola at the same time. X is expected to provide food for his guests as soon as they arrive, and as the potlatch cannot start until all have assembled, X tries to ensure simultaneous arrival, no easy matter
[illegible] since the area from which guests are invited extends from the Nass River to Alert Bay.

The mysterious and sacred nature of the potlatch is impressed on the minds of the uninitiated at the time of departure. When the chief who is to bear the invitation, and the members of the crew are ready in the canoe at the beach, there is heard from X's house the sound of a whistle. The uninitiated, unaware of the method by which the noise is produced, consider it to be the voice of some supernatural being connected with the potlatch. Either the messenger himself, or some assistant with him, blows a whistle. This can be done without exposing the method by putting the whistle to the lips under cover of a large blanket. When this has sounded the canoe is free to proceed.

The messenger-chief carries with him his sacred mask, which he dons if he sees another canoe approaching, while
[illegible] eagle down is scattered over the heads of the paddlers. These two signs intimate that the occupants of the craft are on ceremonial business, therefore must not be molested. For a con-
[illegible] siderable distance up and down the coast the sacred nature of

the potlatch is recognized to such an extent that an attack upon envoys is unthinkable, though one or two mythic accounts tell this convention has been violated on rare occasions. A canoe meeting potlatch messengers moves over to the other side of the channel to give them the right of way.

On reaching the destination the canoe is brought in close to shore until the inhabitants of the village have gathered on the beach, which they swiftly do on the arrival of strangers. The messenger sounds his whistle, the significance of which is fully understood by members of the [illegible] society. Any chief who wishes to show his wealth and importance will invite them to his house. As they are landing, he sends a herald to summon a number of influential people of his village, who seat themselves in their rightful places. As the messengers enter they are given seats on the bench behind the fire, the spot usually reserved for chiefs. A number of fish are called in to [illegible] [illegible] [illegible], and when this has been done the fish and [illegible] are [illegible] by young girls and served to the messengers on a mat, in lieu of a table-cloth. The envoys do not deliver their message as soon as they arrive. On the contrary, they spend the rest of the day pleasantly talking with their hosts, and sleep in the house where they have been received.

The following day likewise passes without ceremony, but towards nightfall the host summons all his fellow-villagers to his house. The singers take up their customary places and beat out a [illegible] tune. Upon hearing his or her air, the owner of it starts to dance. Using their own discretion, the singers beat out the tunes of dance after dance, and each dances. In this fashion the singers beat out several songs, and the owner of each dances. Since the supernatural beings are not present, the dances are merely of a commemorative, not a sacred, nature. When all have danced, each gives a present to the envoys. These gifts are not returnable. They are merely "[illegible]," but it is necessary that something be given to validate the dancing. The value is immaterial, so far as the purpose is concerned, though a chief who wishes to exhibit his [illegible]

one after another of the ceremonial initiators, while the audience, consisting of *sisauk* alone, join in the singing. As the canoes drift out to the guests, they too beat out some of their well-known *sisauk* songs. 595 556 575

At high tide, as the canoes draw near, carefully guided by poles and paddles, the *sisauk* come down to the beach to meet the guests, led by a *sisk*, who then wears an apron of puffin beaks and carries a rattle. The singers beat out one of his tunes and the *sisk* dances on the beach, while the supernatural whistle which has been sounding from the back-room of X's house, is now heard on the side, blown by an assistant under cover of the blankets. After the *sisk* has danced, the singers among the guests, and there are always enough of them to make possible the beating out of the better known tunes, sing one of their *sisk's* songs as he dances on the platform surmounting the canoes. [242] [530]

The Bella Coola *sisk*, surrounded by a group of *sisauk*, now begins to turn about in a frenzied manner, always sunwise, bending down, then straightening himself, twisting and writhing like a maniac. Finally, standing erect, he pretends to throw something to the foreign *sisk*, and then falls to the ground. The recipient makes the motion of catching something heavy, and at the same time one of his accomplices in the canoe sounds another *sisauk* whistle, deluding the uninitiated observers into the belief that some power has been transmitted, which is the cause of the strange noise. The visiting *sisk* revolves four times, twisting and bending, then straightens up and throws back his cloak, to expose a mask representing [illegible]. This he has concealed there all the time, but the uninitiated easily believe it to be the creature which has made the noise, or that it is an object miraculously made by this being. The *sisk* revolves four times more, with the mask in plain sight and the whistle constantly booming, while a Bella Coola speaker "explains" the meaning of it all to the uninitiated who are watching with interest from the background.

535 556 575 The reception of this power from his Bella Coola confrère enables the guest *[illegible]* to dance at X's potlatch, if he so desires. In that case the guests are guided to X's house without further delay. If, however, he does not wish to dance, he goes through the motions of throwing something back to the Bella Coola *[illegible]*, who pretends to catch it. He bends down, twists himself about, then throws back his cape—to display there the representation of *[illegible]*. At the time of throwing, the visiting *[illegible]* had slipped his mask out of sight, so that those witnessing the transaction, ignorant of the fact that the recipient has had an identical mask hidden beneath his cape throughout, are suitably impressed. He now circles four times, while an assistant, stationed under a large cloak, sounds the whistle constantly. Then the *[illegible]* makes the motion of throwing something to X's house, and after that the whistle sounds from within, while the man who had been blowing one beside the *[illegible]* ceases. Thus the uninitiated are led to believe that the voice can proceed only from the place where the power over which the *[illegible]* has control is situated.

556 574 The guests are conducted to X's house, to which a number of young men carry their goods. A meal of steamed salmon, provided by X, is served to them by a number of youths, all of whom are eager to undertake this task throughout the ceremony. A section of the house is allotted to each party of guests, and within that space they arrange themselves according to convenience. Some informants state that the first group to arrive is seated nearest the fire. The whole of those invited are not placed according to rank. The amount of space allotted to each party of guests depends upon their number, and there is no particular choice made of a section in the house. X, or more often some one who speaks for him, welcomes the guests, and a spokesman from among them makes a suitable reply, usually with the assistance of an interpreter. After the meal, the guests can remain where they are or go out. As many as wish to do so stay in X's house, but many prefer to

go to the houses of their friends in the village; it is a matter of convenience, not of ritual. 556 [574]

In the evening, there may be no rite of any kind, but X often invites everyone to his house for the performance of non-ceremonial dances. The singers strike up one of his sound or *e'alk* (I, p. 273) tunes and he dances to it. Then a tune belonging to one of his relatives is beaten out, and he too dances. After several have thus performed, a meal is served and all disperse. No supernatural beings are in attendance, hence there is no solemnity to the occasion; the evening's rites merely serve to show the guests the dances owned by their host and his family. 535 556

As each party of guests arrives the same procedure is repeated. X provides food for those who have assembled from day to day, as he anxiously awaits the last-comers. When at last they come the guests from all other towns are in their allotted sections of X's house, and are free to make gibes at the tardiness of those latest in appearing. Occasionally, hard feelings are engendered in this way, although it is an established custom to mock at the last to arrive. They seat themselves and a small amount of food is given them. 556 574 [208]

RITUAL CARRIED OUT BY THE GUESTS

Two youths, chosen by X for the purpose, sprinkle [illegible] down over the heads of all those present, as far as possible throwing it first over the chiefs. It serves as a token of good will, and marks also the ceremonial nature of the occasion. Then a leading chief, perhaps a [illegible], stands up and says in effect: 556 [788] [787] [776]

"Thank you for coming. You are welcome. We thank you for coming to witness what X has done. He is delighted to have you here, because he has lost many of his relatives and wishes to perpetuate their memory. They would be grieved if he did not do so."

An elaborate meal is now served by a number of young men. [264]

The first course is dried olive salmon mixed with olachen grease. The fish is first placed in boxes, approximately one to every four persons, though a chief may be honoured by an individual box, and the grease poured over it. As always, any food not consumed is carried away. Failure to do so would be an insult to X. Then small wooden dishes are distributed into which are poured the berries of *Viburnum pauciflorum*. The waiters pour olachen grease over these and the mixture is eaten with wooden spoons. These two foods are invariably the first meal of a potlatch.

If the *[illegible]* of the last guests to arrive has not returned the power given him by the Bella Coola expert, he now stands up and shakes his rattle as a signal that he desires to start his dance. The Bella Coola *[illegible]* also stands up, and the visiting *[illegible]* contorts himself and finally pretends to produce something from his stomach, which he throws across to his colleague. The latter feigns to catch it, cries *haiI* loudly several times, and makes the motions of hurling what he has just received into the room at the back of the house where the initiates are concealed. Then he sits down. Meanwhile the last-to-arrive party of guests have started to beat out the time of one of the *[illegible]*[16] songs of their own *[illegible]* who dances in time to it. Then another song is beaten out and another member of the party dances, and so on until all have danced who desire to do so. Each wears his own headdress and each performs in the manner already described. After the dancing, the members of this party of guests give presents to X and other Bella Coola chiefs. There is no fixed ratio between the value of the gifts and the rank of the recipients, though chiefs receive more than lesser men, and X most of all. These presents are *[illegible]*, which may be considered as "single down-stems," merely a mark of friendship and goodwill. They are not returnable. Goods so received are distributed by X with his other possessions at the potlatch, care being taken not to return them to the donors, which would be insulting.

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[16] [illegible] Vol. I, p. [illegible] on [illegible]

After bestowal of these presents, the chief of the penultimate group of guests shakes his rattle, and exactly the same procedure is carried out by members of his party. They, too, give presents to X and the other Bella Coola chiefs. The same rites are carried out by each party of guests in the reverse order of their arrival. It is frequently near dawn before the first comers have completed their dances and distribution of gifts. X then gives another meal to all, with no restriction on the choice of food. This concludes the night's ceremony, and the guests depart, except those who are staying in X's house. 556 *

THE POTLATCH: FIRST DAY

Considering the lengthy ceremonials of the preceding evening, it is not surprising that on this day no one rises early. The guests receive their breakfast in the houses where they are accommodated, and meanwhile a number of young men gather in X's house to assist in the preparation of food for the main meal of the day. During the previous night a large amount of smoked mountain-goat fat has been put in water to soak. This is now placed in a number of food-boxes, ready for distribution, water is added and hot stones lifted in to bring it to a boil. When the water comes to the boil, mountain-goat grease is added, and then huckleberries. It is usually about one o'clock in the afternoon before the meal is ready. The guests are summoned and the food given them, the chiefs, as usual, receiving more than those of lower rank. After eating they disperse to await the evening rites. [551] [552] [554]

It was impossible to obtain an accurate account of the ritual carried out on the evening of this, the first day of the potlatch proper. The ceremonial was of less importance than those preceding and following, and it has long fallen into disuse. The guests take up their accustomed places, and the Bella Coola members of the sisaok range themselves near them and behind the fire. The corners near the door are occupied by non-members of the society. The singers beat out one of [102] 556 * 576 [535] the four songs they have made for the initiate, and any of the sisiuł members of the audience desiring to "help" the initiates dance to them, even X himself on occasion. By "help" no material aid is indicated, such dancing merely displays a friendly and sympathetic interest. The initiates, resplendent in sisiuł head-dresses, appear at the door of the back-room, and sometimes dance a few steps. Occasionally, at the conclusion of his song, a lad's parents, or other relatives, bring forward the goods which will be later distributed by X to the guests. On other occasions, this is reserved for the following day. Food is distributed and all disperse.

THE POTLATCH: SECOND DAY

On this, one of the two most important days of the whole ceremony, the following rites take place.

During the Day

(1) Communication to the foreign guests of the new sisiuł names of the initiates concealed within th back-room; these names are the ones that have been made known to the Bella Coola before the potlatch proper.

(2) Payment to X by the members of his wife's family of the goods necessary to redeem her from [illegible].

During the Evening

(3) Repayment by X of debts owed to members of his own village.

(4) Return of a dead relative of X to visit the living.

(5) Distribution of presents to validate this appearance.

(6) In some cases, dancing by some of the sisiuł initiates.

Early in the morning X gives each of his guests a wash-basin with the other necessary appurtenances for cleaning up, and towards noon all of those invited assemble in his house. There three canoes have been brought in and are ranged, two parallel to the side walls, and one paralleling the back wall, all far enough out to permit people to sit behind them. Boxes containing large quantities of red elderberries and olachen grease have been placed in readiness. X selects as many 556* youths as the number on whom he intends to confer the names 575 which have already been announced and validated among the 553 Bella Coola, but are now to be made known to the foreign guests. He seats the lads, who are to substitute for the initiates, on the various boxes. Everybody understands that these are merely representations. X requests two chiefs to act as his announcers, choosing two with good voices and abundant self-confidence. To one of these X whispers the *sisauk* name of one of the initiates.

"His name is now——" calls out the announcer, pointing to one of the substitutes, and the listeners readily recognize the initiate intended, from the use, in conjunction with his new designation, of his well-known ancestral name. The heralds [203] repeat the new name with the usual badinage, so that it becomes well known to all present. In like manner the *sisauk* name given to each initiate is publicly announced. The substitutes receive no advantage from their part in the proceedings.

Then the boxes are opened and red elderberries poured into 556* the canoes in front of the guests. Stones are provided with 24 which the visitors pound the fruit into pulp which they proceed to mix with their hands, as olachen grease and crabapples [259] are added. Then X's helpers distribute spoons and the feast commences. All start to eat, but after an interval one of the leading Bella Coola chiefs strikes the side of his canoe with a spoon, as a signal that all must stop. X has several dishes in [416] readiness. If he is wealthy some of these will be carved in the [539] shape of beaver, eagle, or other form in which an ancestor appeared. These dishes are filled with the food which all have been eating and then placed before the principal chiefs, who thus have a second supply. At this point the singers begin to 533 beat out an ancient song of the type known as *[illegible]*. Each of these has been handed down from the distant past, when 556* some chief, ancestor of X, had it composed for himself at a potlatch. The theme is always about the fame or name of his [171]

1:McIlwraith K-5 (1922-1924)1948
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PLATE 12

[illegible]

[facing p 216]

538 earliest ancestors, and the text is commonly grandiloquently
*556 phrased.[illegible] Frequently the singers alter the words slightly to suit the occasion, and sometimes compose entirely new words for an old tune. As they sing, they are aided by some of X's friends who rise and pound between the fire and the front door. They occasionally wear feathered masks carved with his crest to add dignity to the rite.

209 After the song the chiefs continue their meal, and there is much practical joking with the heralds.

553 "Don't you want some food?" X calls to one of them.

*556 Without waiting for an answer he throws a box containing the liquid pulp, inclined at such an angle that the mess is spattered over the recipient. Occasionally, a herald will succeed in catching a box without spilling the contents, but usually he is smeared from head to foot, while the spectators shriek with laughter. It is one of the functions of a herald to be a laughing stock for the visitors.

*554 During the afternoon X's wife and the members of her family deliver to him the goods which they have amassed to "re-buy" her from her husband. These are called "smoothing material," as if they supplied X with wash-basin and toilet necessities. The speaker states how the wife has lived up to her obligation in making this presentation, and how it will clear the path for her children. These goods will later on be distributed by X. They can be used for-

(a) Repayment of potlatch debts, or

(b) Making potlatch investments, or

(c) Validating names, either [illegible] or [illegible], for the children of his relatives.

It would be most disgraceful should any of the goods be applied to validating [illegible] names for any of X's own children, because they have come from his wife's people and enure to the advantage of her children in any case. These goods are

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[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

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[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[facing p.218]

[illegible]

[illegible]

not returnable by X to his wife's family. A question on this point was regarded as highly amusing. Unlike the betrothal gifts, the presents received in return are given to X, not to his wife's relations.

A speaker, acting on instructions from the brother or other member of X's wife's family, also announces what names, portions of [illegible], or other privileges she is bestowing on her husband. After that the people disperse, although they are free to re-enter the house, where, during the afternoon, arrangements are being made for the elaborate ceremonial which takes place that night.

Towards dusk the guests reassemble and take their places as before. Part of the goods which X proposes to give away has been brought in, and, aided by members of his family, he busies himself [illegible] and making final plans for its distribution. As the Bella Coola have no system of writing, accurate division of goods at a potlatch causes considerable difficulty and worry to the donor. A slighted guest will feel aggrieved, and the sacred nature of the rite will have been subjected to insult if arrangements are not satisfactory. The first business is the settlement of debts by X to the members of his own village. He may perhaps have borrowed fifty blankets ten years previously from a certain individual whom he now intends to repay, with foreign guests as witnesses to the transaction. X always endeavours to reimburse with as large a premium as possible, because by so doing he displays his nobility of mind to the assemblage, but if he can return only the amount borrowed, or the same with a small increase, there will be no trouble such as might occur should he fail to return at least the principal. When the debt has been settled with interest the matter is at an end, for there is no compulsion upon the man who receives the additional sum to repay this with interest in his turn. The amounts previously lent, and the occasion, are always publicly announced, so that all are made aware of his generosity with regard to interest.

In Kimsquit it was customary at this stage of the potlatch

* 556 184 logs to reward carpenters and others who had helped X prepare for his potlatch, but in Bella Coola this was usually done the following night.

* 556 769 Now comes what the Bella Coola regard as the most important feature of the potlatch.[38] The singers strike up one of the songs of a senior *kusiut*, perhaps a *sisaok* chosen for his skill in acting. 556 576 [580] As he dances, clad in his ceremonial costume and head-dress, whistling is heard without the house. A number of *kusiut* are making the noise and they modulate it so that it appears to draw nearer and nearer. This is effected either with whistles of different sizes or by blowing harder. The dancer rushes out of the house. The whistling continues in a series of short bursts, as if a conversation were being carried on in that language. The *kusiut* or *sisaok* returns, and the audience, silenced by the mystery of the affair, listens to his explanation:

"It is so-and-so," he announces, using the ancestral name of one of X's deceased relatives. "The crest has come to pay his son [or whatever relation X may be to him] a visit. I will bring him in."

While he speaks, continuous whistling is heard from without, but when he leaves the house it once more takes on the form of a dialogue. Presently he returns, followed by a masked figure in the centre of a group of members of the *kusiut* society. [532] If the deceased's first ancestor had been an eagle, in that guise the figure will appear—an eagle mask on his head, and his whole body, except perhaps the feet, covered by a large blanket thickly covered with eagle down and furnished with painted wooden wings. The dancer is usually entirely blinded by this costume, but he is guided by a member of the *kusiut* whose presence is attributed to the necessity for guarding and paying honour to the supernatural visitor. [548] Among those who accompany him there is always a man with a whistle, the note of which imitates the cry of an eagle, and this is sounded at intervals. [532] The actor bends in imitation of a bird and shakes himself, lifting his head and opening the movable beak by means of a hidden string, while the whistle sounds. Then he stoops down and hops a few steps eagle fashion. Slowly, with pauses and turnings around, the figure circles the fire and exits through the front door, always attended by a number of [illegible]. The actor displays considerable dramatic ability, and the performance is strikingly effective in the large, plank-built house, illumined only by a smoky central fire which casts flickering shadows over the intently watching audience. The dogs, alone unimpressed by the solemnity of the occasion, slink to and fro. 557 767 535 575 [539]

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[38] Though potlatches can be held without this feature.

If a whale is represented, a large wooden frame-work is carried by several men who walk inside of it. Raven, bear, or other animals may also be used, according to the ancestral myth of the deceased. Some of the first people came to this earth as men, but there have always been a sufficient number of intermarriages to permit everyone to portray some bird or beast, obtained from the family into which an ancestor married. A supernatural object claimed to have been seen by a forefather can also be used on these occasions. In some cases a composite figure is used. Such may have the head of an eagle, a killer whale projecting from the back, and a raven on its chest. In such a case these three creatures have been connected with the ancestry of the deceased, and his spirit is believed to have assumed these forms. Great individual choice is allowed in such matters. [579] [531] [174]

If several of X's deceased relatives are being commemorated, the sound of whistling is again heard from without, a short time after the departure of the first masked figure. A senior [illegible] goes out, and the same ritual is repeated. This time the masked actor represents some other bird or animal. Three, or in some cases four, dead people are thus shown, though one is more customary. The actual management of the figures is left to the direction of the carpenters who have made them. Often a foreign workman is employed, as a mark of respect for his skill. In spite of all precautions there are often delays about the final preparations, especially with regard

556 764 [372] [336] to a complicated figure such as a whale, and in that case an expert dancer among the guests is called upon to perform. It is announced that this is, "to make clear the road for the dead."

After each masked figure has disappeared, the sound of whistling from without grows gradually weaker, as the apparition returns whence it came. In solemn silence X takes a copper[1] which he has had in readiness, breaks it across his knee,[2] and throws it either into the fire or down on the ground in the track that the figure has taken. Then the announcer calls out loudly:

"It is for his crest.[3] It has 'made form for the dead.'" Then he continues, speaking for X and using the first person:

"My heart is glad at seeing my father.[4] At death he returned back on the path of my family's ancestors and donned our ancient crest. He now lives in *Nusmat·a*, whence he came to visit us and whither he has now gone back."

[178] The significance of the throwing down of a copper is entirely unknown to the modern Bella Coola, although they still perform the ritual. In some vague way it is felt that "form," which may imply *stability*, has been provided for the deceased. The act thus appears in the light of an offering to the dead, but this sentiment is not clearly appreciated by the participants in the rite; the present has been made *for*, rather than *to*, the one being mourned.

The copper, now valueless, is picked up by any chief and given to a poor man.

[324] [491] After a short interval a number of youths begin to distribute presents, provided by X, which have been placed in readiness. Gifts of equal value are given to all foreign male guests; while the women receive ones less valuable. These presents

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[225] [436]

[1] One of the plaques of native copper, such as were formerly beaten out and used as tokens of value by the coast tribes of British Columbia. Their employment by the Bella Coola will be described later in greater detail (I, p. [illegible]).

[2] The breaking is sometimes omitted.

[3] That is: "For the dead man, now in form of his crest."

[4] Or whatever relative the deceased may have been.

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are strictly non-returnable, being regarded as "eagle down," and having, therefore, a ceremonial significance. They validate and mark the importance of the representation just displayed. They are spoken of as having been shaken off by the deceased as he departed to return to his home above. [769 43]

If there are many *sisauk* initiates concealed within the back-room, some of them may now be called upon to dance, but usually this is reserved for the following night. Unless some of those secluded are going to dance, food is distributed and all disperse. [575 595]

THE POTLATCH: THIRD DAY

This is the day when presents are given and, with the previous, is the most important of the whole ceremonial. The following are its features.

During the Day

(1) Distribution of much food, and sometimes of insults to the guests by excessive presents, or by the destruction of valuables. [578]

During the Evening and Night

(2) Dramatic representation of some object connected with X's ancestral myth.

(3) Distribution of presents by X to recompense the craftsmen who have assisted in the potlatch.

(4) Repayments by X of gifts received at previous potlatches.

(5) Giving of presents by X to some of his guests.

(6) Distribution of presents to strengthen X's seat.

(7) Distribution of presents to strengthen, or establish, seats for a number of young men.

(8) Dancing of the *sisauk* initiates. 556*

(9) Distribution of presents to recompense those who have assisted the *sisauk* dancers. 575

(10) *Distribution of presents to validate the sisauk dances* and the names thereby acquired by the initiates.

The Bella Coola state that the Kwakiutl term for this is [illegible]

556 [575] (11) Dismissal of the supernatural power possessed by the novice initiates, thereby enabling them to return to normal life in the community.

556 578 191 All day, food is being distributed in X's house with guests in almost constant attendance. Not only are large presents of food made to any chief who has previously shown generosity to X, but he also takes this opportunity to bestow insults on anyone from whom he has received the same. Among the Bella Bella and people of Rivers Inlet guests were frequently ridiculed with respect to their habitual diet or mode of life. Unquestionably, the Bella Coola sometimes did likewise, both at potlatches and at *kusiut* rites to which strangers were invited. Although it is dangerous to dogmatize on this point, because the practice has long since fallen into disuse, it appears highly probable that mockeries were less prevalent in Bella Coola than at other places on the coast.

556 558 628 It is comparatively common, however, for a chief to shame a guest by a lavish disregard for valuables. News is constantly passing from town to town, so that the intended victim usually hears what is in store for him. A guest always takes valuable goods with him when he goes to a potlatch, but one who expects to be insulted takes care to have an unusually large supply. The host seats this particular visitor close to the fire, and during the afternoon or early evening he throws large quantities of grease and food upon it, to demonstrate "the warmth" and "fineness" of his house. The guest experiences physical discomfort from the extreme heat, and suffers mental pangs at having a rival boast of his power and fame. To assert his own importance he will throw goods on the fire, as if they were water to extinguish it, and the host will counter by throwing on more valuables. The contest is continued until the goods of the guest are exhausted, or the host fears to burn more lest he should not have enough left to validate the potlatch. He who has destroyed most is considered to have shown his superiority. The Bella Coola state that such rivalry was unknown between chiefs of the same village. [578]

The following is an account of a feud which took place about 1870: 556* 558 628

The people of *Sᴀnᴀl* had gone to a potlatch at *Tāl-io* with a plentiful supply of goods, expecting to be insulted in revenge for a slight cast upon their host when visiting *Sᴀnᴀl*. They were allotted places close to the fire, upon which the donor cast a large quantity of olachen grease until the intense heat almost roasted his guests. Not one of them moved; to have done so would have meant an admission that they were being made uncomfortable by their host's demonstration of wealth by this waste of valuable food. Presently, *Sᴀnᴀxlatla*, the leading chief of the visitors, stood up and called for "water" to douse the flames, meaning goods of equal or greater value, to indicate that he was as wealthy as his host and as little afraid of destroying valuables. His companions threw on the fire boxes filled with skins, but *Sᴀnᴀxlatla* desired still further to demonstrate his prowess. Hastily, he asked some of the other Bella Coola present to lend him a sea canoe (of the large type called *Haidáł*), promising to repay with two of the same kind. [591] The Bella Coola agreed and the craft was carried in, the bearers showing their disregard for the host by breaking his door as they did so. The canoe was thrown on the fire and the flames mounted. *Sᴀnᴀxlatla* called upon his *Tāl-io* rival to douse that fire. The latter was afraid to do so, being aware that he had barely enough goods to pay his debts at the coming distribution. Accordingly, he tacitly acknowledged the superiority of *Sᴀnᴀxlatla*, who thus rose in public esteem.

It is very difficult to discover just how often such destruction of goods took place. The Bella Coola realise that the prevalence of this practice among the Kwakiutl led to the potlatch being forbidden by law, and are reticent on the subject. 556* 558 171 Reliable informants agree that it was a fairly common custom in the early days, although it never went to the extremes prevailing at Fort Rupert and Alert Bay, where, too, was common the breaking of coppers in anger, an act unknown in Bella Coola. In other respects, also, the potlatch among the Bella Coola appears to be less important and less complicated in ritual than among the Kwakiutl, so it is highly probable that the above statement is correct.

Another method of shaming a guest is to serve him, or any member of his party, so clumsily or gracelessly with food that it is spattered over him. 558 556* In some cases this happens acci-

*556 558 directly, but the sentiment is that the guest has been "dirtied." To cleanse himself he gives presents to the heralds of his host, and perhaps to some of the latter's fellow-villagers, thus showing that he too is in a position to demonstrate his chief-like nature by a distribution of goods. The host usually takes the hint and is more gracious in future.

A man can render himself liable to ridicule and insult by saying that he is about to give a potlatch, and then failing to do so. Influenced by his announcement, those giving potlatches have showered presents upon the prospective donor, and if he fails to carry out his plans he will undoubtedly receive insults. Such a man, if he is wise, will carry with him to potlatches large quantities of goods to throw on the fire of his host, or to give to his host's heralds, or to use in both ways.

Thus the afternoon passes. When the people, including
*556 those who are not members of the sacred society, have assembled in the evening, a dramatic representation of some event connected with X's ancestral myth is common. A similar performance has sometimes taken place as the first event on the preceding evening. The commonest rite is connected with a whale and can be performed by those whose first forefathers came to this earth as whales, or by those whose ancestors obtained the prerogative by marriage with people who owned it. When all are seated, a number of young men rush into the house carrying with them a tree-trunk roughly hollowed out to represent a whale. The cry is raised that the animal is about to vomit, and at the same time large quantities of grease are thrown on the fire by assistants on the roof. The subterfuge is realized by all. None imagines that the whale actually throws up the grease, but the comparison is drawn between the monster voiding grease because it is fat, and a chief throwing away wealth which lesser men would consider of great worth. A display of this kind increases the fame of X, the concept being the usual one, that he has demonstrated his nobility of mind.

Now begins the distribution of the large quantities of goods which X has amassed. These have been collected in heaps near the fire where he, aided by members of his family, is constantly poring over the question of their proper distribution. One or two boys (?) which have been chosen by X to act as speakers, and, as he tells them which gift is to be given to which man, the speaker holds up the article in question and announces the name of the recipient. It is also proclaimed from whom, and for what reason X has received each assortment of goods, thereby making known the names of those who have contributed. In this way a man is glorified who has repaid with large interest a debt owing to X. In the case of skins or rolls of cloth, the goods about to be given out are held outspread by several people at their full length, prior to being torn into strips. Each beneficiary accepts what is coming to him from the hands of the young men who act as deliverers without displaying either gratitude or disgust, whether or not the present comes up to his expectations. The point of view is that the matter concerns X alone; on his generosity depends his status in the community. 556*

The first gifts distributed are actually payments, though never referred to as such. The Bella Coola consider that X is under obligations to those who have helped him prepare for the potlatch and that he is discharging these obligations by presents. The carpenters who have made the new house, the totem-pole, and other objects used in the rites, must be rewarded, likewise the singers who have composed the songs, the messengers, the women waiters, the masked dancers, the announcers who even now are distributing the goods, the boys helping with the cooking, the guests who make speeches—one and all have to be compensated. It is an anxious time for X, as he must not overlook any of these functionaries. Paper and pencil are now used to assist the memory, but long ago the only aids were bundles of sticks. No system of symbolism was evolved, each man merely chose a stick and designated it in his mind as a reminder to pay such or such an individual. The 556* 645 [211]

[illegible]

[illegible]

skill shown by those who assisted, as well as the generosity of [illegible], explains the disbursements.

The following presents of money were given at a potlatch held about 1890, and were considered reasonable:

For painting one design[1] on the front outside wall of the house	$ 40.00
For the erection of four upright posts, supporting the walls and roof of the house	40.00
For each longitudinal beam with painting	[illegible]
For each cross-beam, without painting	[illegible]
For the planking of the side walls[2]	100.00
For painting the rear wall of house, which is also the outside wall of the back room[3]	40.00

An average totem pole would cost perhaps $[illegible], but the prices varied greatly with size, complexity of design, and skill displayed.

The next distribution is of goods to repay debts which [illegible] has incurred at previous potlatches, that is, to return "investment presents" then received (I, p. [illegible]). This is known as [illegible], "repay," and the word is applied to all kinds of repayments, including revenge. One of a chief's difficulties is to remember his indebtedness. He may have been a guest at twenty potlatches, and at each has received presents varying in value, not only from different donors, but from other people associated with them. To keep these accurately in mind is hard but essential, and parents carefully train their children to do so.

As previously mentioned, the Bella Coola have no fixed scale of interest on debts. Careful inquiries made on this point disclosed the idea to be entirely foreign. The greater the interest, the greater does the donor show himself to be. If, for example, [illegible] received an investment present of one hundred blankets from a Bella Bella chief ten years previously,

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[1] [illegible]

[2] Four men would work together on this task.

[3] Four men would work together on this, the choice of design corresponding to those of the outside front.

Hence repayment or non-repayment does not affect the standing of the debtor in the community. The giver expects no return, but should he come to financial straits he would have no hesitation in asking aid from the Bella Bella chief. He expects, moreover, that the latter will contribute to the expenses of his funeral. This would be optional, as repayment of a non-ceremonial present concerns the donor and recipient alone, without effect on the status of either in the community. In this instance, if the old man had died soon after his son, his debts would not have been paid, since there were surviving no immediate relatives. Sons or other near kinsmen always settle the debts of dead parents out of family pride, but it is considered most improper for the creditors to think about repayment. By giving they have shown their power, the question of return is the concern of the family of the deceased recipient.

Very rarely can the donor of a potlatch fail to return his ceremonial presents except through oversight. In spite of every precaution errors occur, and these are said to be caused either by a supernatural being, itself invisible, rising between the donor and a guest, hiding the latter, or by *[illegible]* stealing away his thoughts. Unless the donor wishes to insult a guest he will give him presents later on, and thus mend the matter. But if he does not do so, the slighted man may resent the insult, and thus feuds are often generated that may lead to war between tribes. About 1880 it is said that a conflict between the people of Bella Bella and Rivers Inlet was caused in this way. In the autumn of 1922, a Bella Coola chief insisted on dancing at a Bella Bella potlatch, although it was commonly known he did not have the necessary goods for distribution to validate his dance. The hosts resented [illegible] [illegible] by [illegible], and only the presence of [illegible] prevented bloodshed. Relations between the two tribes are still strained as a result of this incident. The Bella Coola chief was subject to spells of insanity, and died during one of these. According to the

Bella Coola, the Bella Bella should have taken this into account, along with the man's generosity on previous occasions, and overlooked his omissions.

Cases have been known of a "stupid" man endeavouring to increase his prestige by giving many potlatches when unable to pay his debts. Such a one is laughed at for his stinginess, which is not the attribute of a chief, and is given only small presents.

It must be clearly understood that debts publicly incurred, in other words investment presents received at any ceremony, must be publicly returned, if the debtor is to gain the public esteem granted to one who pays back with interest. But everyone cannot give a potlatch; hence any young man desirous of returning his obligations, and of rising in public favour, can do so at a potlatch given by somebody else. Guests are present from abroad, so his discharge of indebtedness is made known farther afield than if he had done so at a local gathering, and the donor has the additional satisfaction of being able to give to these strangers. Sometimes as many as ten young men will ask X for permission to pay their debts at his potlatch. Such is never refused, because it means more ceremonial, and greater interest, which indirectly increase X's prestige. A young man who has been taken to a foreign potlatch as an adherent of a guest always receives presents, and if he repays these with interest his name begins to become known, especially as his return payments are unexpected. It is thus that a man whose chiefly name (or names) has been dormant for generations, can begin to restore it. Thanks to presents he gives at X's potlatch, he will in return receive large gifts, until finally he is able to give a potlatch himself. After X has paid his own indebtedness the debts of others are settled. In each case the speaker announces the amount received on such and such an occasion and the amount returned. Thus all present are able to estimate the generosity of the payer, a chiefly attribute. When a young man plans to give his first potlatch it is customary for the older chiefs of his village to advise whether he has

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sufficient goods, though every man is understood to be master of his own affairs.

After paying his debts X will has many heavy expenses in connection with the canoe initiates, and the young people for whom he is obtaining wives. Goods for these purposes have been put on one side. The remainder he now proceeds to give away as investment presents. His exhibition of ancestral prerogatives, and the [illegible] in which his ancestors are now living, as eagle, raven, whale, or such like, have been duly validated by the presents given on the preceding evening, and his social status has been cared for by the payments to his [illegible] and other creditors. These investment presents are not essential, though a man always endeavours to give them, both for economic and social reasons. There are no definite laws regulating their distribution. X is guided in his choice of recipients[1] by the following considerations:

(1) If a certain chief is likely to give a potlatch soon he knows that a present given him will be returned with interest.

(2) He desires to give something to a chief from whom he has often received favours.

(3) He wishes to ingratiate himself with a powerful chief by presents.

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+ 556
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(4) He wishes to give presents to a chief with whom he is not on friendly terms. Unless the latter reciprocates, it will be considered that X has shown his superiority.

(5) Usually an important chief will receive more valuable presents than one of lesser rank. This custom is not governed by any fixed rule, and an important chief may be deliberately slighted, if X thinks that he has not shown him, X, sufficient respect.

It is considered the height of folly to give presents without due regard to their return.

The amount of gifts depends entirely on the wealth and desires of X. If he wishes to increase his fame, he will endeavcome to give valuable presents, but he need not give any. It is a deep disgrace to any man to be unable to return these presents. Nothing is said, nor does the donor take active steps to receive his returns, but the influence of the recipient [illegible] wanes. It is expected that a heavier rate of interest will be paid on presents received many years before repayment, but again this is a matter of individual volition. The debts of a man who dies while owing for goods received at potlatches are occasionally discharged by his family. If they fail to do so, their own influence is lessened.

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[1] Only one present is given to each man, irrespective of the number of names he may have. [illegible]

One method of reducing the value of an investment present can be used by a man who feels unable to repay a large gift. The uncle of an elderly Bella Coola was once guest at a Kimsquit potlatch, where he received, as an investment present, a fine large canoe and one hundred blankets. Not wishing to incur so large a liability he at once returned fifty of the blankets to his host for distribution among the guests. Consequently, he was expected to make return for only one hundred and fifty blankets, with whatever interest he desired. This action tended to lower his prestige, since it acknowledged his inability or unwillingness to repay the present. The chief in question, being firmly established in the chiefly caste, did not fear to do this, though one of lesser rank would have hesitated to confirm his inferiority.

It is on the value of the goods distributed in these three types of presentation, namely, recompense for work done, repayment of debts, and investment presents, that the importance of the potlatch, and consequently of its donor, is mainly judged. These distributions of presents are for the potlatch as a whole, including the return of the dead and the intangible prestige of it; the donations which follow are to validate specific transactions which can be noticed. In one or two families the whole course of the potlatch is changed, since the members have the prerogative of distributing their presents outside the house. In such a case the giving is done during the day instead of at night. Details of this rituals,

[illegible]

[illegible]

which is said to have come as a prerogative obtained through marriage with a Kwakiutl woman, were not obtained.

After the distribution of investment presents comes the strengthening of Ψ's seat.

His wife, aided by members of her family, has placed the necessary goods in readiness, though it is pretended they merely happen to be on hand. A herald takes his place near the door, and another behind the fire. Beside the latter stands a chief, attired in a small head-dress, who represents Ψ. One of the heralds calls on this substitute to come forward, as if he were just entering the house, and shouts:

"There is no place for him to sit!"

Then he turns to Ψ's wife, saying:

"See if you have not a few trifles in your room to strengthen him."

The word for "strengthen" is [illegible], or [illegible], which means, "shoring up," as if Ψ were [illegible] on his chief-like base. The words have the other significance of "clothing." They represent the [illegible] dignity wherewith a chief is garbed.

Ψ's wife goes to her room, or to the place in the house where the goods are stored, and brings forth a large assortment of valuables, which are piled in a convenient spot. The substitute who is representing Ψ then places himself in the latter's seat, which is to be made more solid by these goods. Ψ's wife may tell the herald that they have still more goods for him, and in that case he calls out:

"His seat is too hard. Have you no soft cloths for it?"

The wife brings forward more goods to make her husband's seat more comfortable. The herald, who has been chosen for his fluency, uses his ingenuity in what he calls for from the wife; soft cloths for the seat is merely an example. In some cases many presents are given, in other cases, if the wife and her family be poor, these are but not of little worth. It is not essential that foreign guests witness this establishment or strengthening of a seat, though their presence ensures that Ψ's

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More goods are brought forth. In like fashion all kinds of things are bestowed: a copper, "to support Y's back"; a mountain-skin, "to shield him from the fire"; two stones, "to make him strong and heavy as he moves about the earth"; a pile of blankets, "to provide a cape to keep him warm"; more goods, "to give him dinner"; some cloth, "to wipe his mouth after eating"; and other things to provide him with hat, leggings, and so on. The family of Y keep telling the herald that they have more goods, so that he knows how long to continue his complaints about Y's needs.

As soon as all the available goods have been piled up, they are given to the guests, who are witnesses of the validation of the name and seat in the house. Theoretically, the value of the present received by each is not affected by the rank of the recipient; X decides whether or not each guest shall receive a present of like value, or whether men shall receive more than women. Owing to the difficulty of accurate estimation of the amount required, there is often a residue, which is given away to the more important chiefs. These goods are strictly not returnable. They are spoken of as having "become nothing," with reference to the name and seat in question.

Exactly the same procedure is carried out for every young person whom X wishes to start up to validate in his seat. Parents take advantage of a potlatch to "strengthen" their children in this way, and X never refuses a request for participation. It is always announced whence have come the goods for distribution, so that X receives no direct increase of fame, if they have been provided solely by the relatives of the youth, but, indirectly, his prestige is increased through the transaction having taken place at his potlatch.

It is at this time too that other names are validated. There will be usually a number of infants whose parents wish them to receive their first child names, such as are incorporated in the family myths. Likewise, men may be confirmed in their occupations, as warriors, singers, or other professions in which

[illegible]
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[illegible]

[illegible]

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[illegible], according to the Bella Coola, depends upon the goods expended in their establishment (I, p. [illegible]).

Throughout all this ceremonial the initiates have been carefully concealed in the back-room. They are now eagerly, though with trepidation, awaiting their time to dance. The order of appearance is a matter of no importance. It is arranged by the singers, who send word to one of the initiates and then begin to beat out one of his songs. He emerges, clad in a ceremonial blanket, wearing a [illegible] head-dress, and holding a rattle in his hand. Taking up his station behind the fire he dances in time to the beating of sticks. As he dances, the speaker calls upon X's wife to bring forward goods as "[illegible] for him to stand upon," or "[illegible] to [illegible] with his [illegible]." These are piled at some convenient spot. After dancing, the initiate retires to the back-room, accompanied by one of the older members of the [illegible] society, perhaps a [illegible]. This man presently emerges, saying:

"It is most peculiar. An eagle is there now."[1]

At the same time a whistle sounds from the back-room, in imitation of the scream of an eagle.

There ensues a constant interplay of remarks between the [illegible] and those regulating the ceremony. One of the former may call out:

"Let us see it."

The elder returns to the back-room, saying, "I will bring it out."

There now emerges a figure masked to represent an eagle, or whatever bird or animal it may be, with a long blanket covering all but the feet. Any clever dancer is employed to wear this disguise, seldom the initiate himself. The "eagle" bends down beside the singers as if whispering a song to them, though in reality they have themselves composed it. They sing this as the masked figure moves around the fire, imitating the gait of an eagle with considerable dramatic skill, while an

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[1] [illegible]

776 578 [791] emanates thence a whistle, sounding like an eagle. When the figure has disappeared into the back-room, the heralds discuss with one another in a loud tone of voice how that was the form in which the initiate's ancestor appeared long ago. At the present time there is uncertainty concerning the proper ritual connected with the appearance of the initiate at this juncture.

A speaker would then calls on X to bring forward goods, "to shield our eyes from the supernatural being." These articles, part of which may have been provided by relatives of the initiate, are piled beside those brought forward by X's wife, which may also have come from the same source.

[796] The singers strike up the second song of the initiate; again he appears and dances to it, then vanishes into the rear room.

[347] The two assortments of goods are now distributed. First, those provided by X are presented to the singers who composed the songs for the initiate, to the carpenters who made the masks, the heralds, and announcers, and any others who have assisted. If any remain they are presented to the stranger-guests. Then the goods which are "mats for the dancer's feet" are distributed, entirely to the guests, and are said to have "become nothing" or to have "flowed away" in the transaction. Neither set of goods is returnable. These presents validate in the eyes of the guests, the right of the initiate to membership in the [illegible] society.

Then a second, third, or fourth neophyte is called out, one at a time, and the same procedure is repeated.[1] In distributing the goods, efforts are made to remember those guests who received nothing at the first distribution.

Toward dawn, one of the important chiefs, [illegible] [illegible] which may, calls out:

"I want a [illegible]."

[788] It is understood that for this part of the ceremony a foreign [illegible] is required, and one such comes forward according to previous arrangement. He retires to the back-room and [illegible]

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[1] Though [illegible], it is seldom possible for all the initiates to dance on the same night.

There now remains only the necessity of removing from the house itself the supernatural power with which it is firmly believed to have been impregnated throughout the many nights of the ceremony. Should this not be done, it would be so strong that only [illegible] could thenceforth live in it, and no [illegible] rite could be performed therein. One of the senior chiefs, acting on X's behalf, requests as many [illegible] as are present to go to the back-room. At the same time a drum is beaten slowly. The [illegible] call out loudly, in unison, [illegible] four times. The whistles sound from the back-room with ever-lessening intensity, as if the supernatural being, whose voice they are, were going away. It is said that this practice has been comparatively recently adopted from Rivers Inlet; there used to be nothing of the kind. The [illegible] re-emerge, and one of them stands behind the fire with his stick which he beats on the floor and calls on the audience to shout with him, "[illegible]." This is done four times. It serves to purify the house from the supernatural power with which it has been saturated. The people then disperse, without food. 552 575 783 784 [779]

Goods from the general store are reserved to pay these men for their services, and also for cleansing the initiates from the powers with which they have been imbued, a rite that takes place the following morning in the presence of several [illegible] alone. The initiates are brought from the back-room and seated in a close circle between the door and the fire.* A foreign [illegible] is chosen by X to perform the actual cleansing rite. He has been asked beforehand and has come provided with a long pole and some soiled clothing. It is immaterial whose this is, provided that it has been in contact with a human body; the most potent articles are menstrual cedar-bark pads. [845] [778] [841]

The [illegible] covers the young men with a large cedar-bark mat. Then he fastens the clothing or pads to his pole and holds the end in the fire until they are smouldering. Then he swings it four times over the heads of the initiates and throws the stick

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*Behind the fire according to some informants.

556 575 713 787 with the objects back on the fire. In some cases four sets of cloths are used. This rite, which is regarded as very important, frees the lads from the supernatural powers with which they have been endowed, and permits them finally to leave the back-room and return to normal life, just as their earlier cleansing freed them from the initiation. During their period of seclusion no initiate can perform a *kusiut* ceremony of any kind. The supernatural beings of the two societies, though closely akin, are yet independent, and it would be unthinkable for a man to come into contact with the two at the same time, unless he should be the owner of a rare prerogative enabling [824] [777] him to do so. Only a few men have the right, which undoubtedly was derived either from the Bella Bella or the people of Rivers Inlet.

556 575 [465] X pays the functioning *alk* with new clothing. This completes the whole ceremony. The guests either return home or adjourn to some other house where a potlatch is taking place, but no rites mark their departure.

556 771 Such, then, are the principal features of the Bella Coola potlatch. Without making a careful comparison of its features with those of neighbouring tribes, the following points stand out with great clearness:

(1) The basic concepts of the potlatch in Bella Coola are the same as those of the rite practised elsewhere on the coast.

(2) A potlatch has not the same importance at Bella Coola as it has on other parts of the coast, especially among the Kwakiutl. All informants stated repeatedly that they did not [186] carry their potlatches to the same lengths as did the "foolish" Kwakiutl, nor were they so keen financiers. A Bella Coola would never entirely impoverish himself by lavish giving.

(3) The potlatch, though fundamentally the same as it is elsewhere on the coast, has certain rites characteristic of the locality. The central Bella Coola feature, the return of a dead ancestor, is not equally important elsewhere. It would be interesting to be able to trace the history of this. The most

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probable conjecture, and it is impossible to make more than a conjecture, is that it is a concept which has developed among the Bella Coola in association with their specialized theology and has been incorporated into the potlatch complex. On the other hand, the return of the dead may be an old feature, decayed in other tribes through the ever-increasing economic aspects of the potlatch, which are of less import in Bella Coola. Whether or not *[illegible]* is of Bella Coola origin is questionable; he may be merely an altered form of a supernatural being found among other coastal tribes.

(a) The potlatch concept, that is, the necessity of distributing presents to validate every transaction, and to establish a man's status, is an old custom. The whole trend of Bella Coola thought supports this view, and it is to be expected from the prevalence of the same idea among other coastal tribes.

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Unquestionably, the introduction of white man's tools has made it easier to give a potlatch. In the old days, as informants reiterated again and again, it was a matter of years to save up the essential skins and goods, so that a potlatch was a rare event. Now a man is able to work in a cannery for a single season and earn enough for an elaborate ceremony. Accordingly, most of the old names have been duly validated, whereas long ago some of them might have lain dormant for generations. The descendants of old, influential families smile ruefully:

"Now everyone is a chief," they say.

It appears that the facility for giving potlatches has increased the feature of the destruction of goods, in fact that this is little more than an excrescence on the ancient ritual. Thus it may be said that the coming of the white man has facilitated the giving of potlatches, has somewhat changed their form, but has not altered their concept.

CHAPTER 9

FEATURES ASSOCIATED WITH THE POTLATCH

Heralds—Totem-Poles—Coppers—Professional Prerogatives—[illegible] Dances—Miscellaneous Ceremonies

128 *556 THE ritual of the potlatch is so complicated that, in order to present a coherent account of it, it has been necessary to omit entirely some features that occur at many potlatches, and to refer briefly to others. This chapter is devoted to an elaboration of these points, thus avoiding the use of lengthy foot-notes in the preceding chapter.

HERALDS

203 *556 The principal functions of heralds[1] have already been described. They go from house to house inviting the people to assemble for the different ceremonies connected with the potlatch, but that is only one of their many duties. They likewise bear invitations to all types of ceremonies, such as marriages, mourning rites, or *kusiut* dances; in fact, they act as town criers. A person holding any public rite requests one or more heralds to deliver the invitation which is repeated in every house of the village in order from bottom to top.[2]

There are variations, of course, according to the rites to be performed. At a potlatch, the first duty of a herald is to seat the guests in their proper places. This requires not only a good memory, but also considerable tact, since errors with foreign guests cause friction and embarrassment, and diminish the prestige of the whole community. During the actual progress of the rites, a herald must constantly add dignity to the occa-

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[1] Herald, [illegible], plural, [illegible], not to be confused with [illegible], the name of a society (I, p. [illegible]).

[2] This order may once have had a ceremonial significance but it has been considered for a long time merely a matter of convenience. When giving presents also, a man follows the same order in his mind and names first the occupants of the bottom house, thus minimizing the danger of overlooking a guest.

sion by repeating loudly a few words, or even phrases, from 203
the speeches being delivered, or calling on the audience to 556*
notice what has just been said and to listen attentively. A
white man would be annoyed at such interruptions, but the
Bella Coola consider them evidences of attentiveness.

The making of comments is a duty performed at every type
of ceremony, but it is indispensable at potlatches; since a chief
depends on the heralds to emphasize and explain the points of
his family history which are being displayed. One intelligent
man likened their functions to a compass, constantly guiding
the course of ceremonial life. Without a herald a chief would
be as useless as a ship tossed on the ocean with no hand to steer.
Although the principal duty of heralds is to extol the actions 203
of a chief, they can, and are expected to, deride one who fails 556*
to carry out the customary requirements. Cases have occurred
in which influential men have so far forgotten their function of 558
generosity as to fail to invite their fellows after killing a deer 626
or other large animal; or women have declined to share their
abundant berries. Nothing is said at the time, but when next [224]
the people have come together for some ceremony, a herald [222]
refers to the omission under so slim a disguise that everyone is
aware of his meaning. This public ridicule lowers the prestige
of a chief to such an extent that he is careful not to offend
again. Not many years ago, a certain Kimsquit chief failed
to ask others to share some mountain goats which he had
killed; at the first opportunity a herald referred to himself as
Yaki, Mountain Goat, and all present realized that he was
really alluding to the one who had been remiss.

Heralds must exercise care in their witticisms at the expense
of chiefs because, unless public opinion is with them, the point
of the remark is lost, and they expose themselves to the wrath
of the person offended. Nevertheless, heralds always strive 203
to cause merriment, and often take risks with this aim in view.
They try to make humorous remarks, and also to cause amuse- 522
ment by their antics. As already described, the donor of a 556*
potlatch may throw to one of them a dish containing liquid food

203 in such a way that the contents dribble over the recipient;
522 sometimes, though able to catch the dish, a herald may
*556 deliberately allow the sticky pulp to cover him. The humour
of this is increased by the fact that guests at potlatches always
receive their food in a ceremonious manner.

Though one of a herald's duties is to act as buffoon, his
203 position is only very slightly derogatory. In the beginning of
*556 time, Raven himself did not hesitate to act in this capacity on
[773] many occasions. Ever since, the post has usually been occupied by relatives of chiefs, especially by those who are unable
to give potlatches. In some cases the position is sought by
ambitious young men, willing to endure the slight loss of dignity for the emoluments. Since the basic principle of every
Bella Coola ceremony is that the donor must recompense those
who have assisted him, heralds are always lavishly rewarded.
At potlatches especially, chiefs remember their dependence
upon the heralds, and shower presents upon them. One who
has allowed himself to be spattered with liquid food to amuse
the guests, is suitably compensated, but in any case he receives
presents for summoning and seating the guests and for interrupting the speeches. The same principle holds good in all
other ceremonies. An elderly informant related that once in
his younger days he had been dancing a *susaoḳ* dance, when
two heralds remarked that the ground on which he was dancing
was dirty, meaning, that it had not been made clean by the
distribution of sufficient presents to justify his dance. His
mother at once gave the heralds two muskets, valuable articles
in those days, to clear her son's path. These belonged to the
informant, who knew nothing about the transaction until it
had been completed, but he accepted as a matter of course the
necessity of giving presents to heralds. If the seat on which a
chief is sitting should break, presents must be given to heralds,
and if a *kusiut* should fall when a herald is watching, the latter
[622] receives gifts. At the marriage of a chief's son, a herald can
[585] claim and remove any of the clothing of the bridegroom or his
associates. Above all other occasions, when a young chief is

first established on his seat, he must reward the heralds lavishly for their remarks. 203 556*

As with so many elements of culture, the Bella Coola ascribe the origin of heralds to the wish of *Alquntam* as expressed to the first people in the beginning of time. Some groups of these early settlers brought with them heralds whose names had been created by the supreme deity himself in his house in the land above. Such a one was *Qāpū'lī* who was a member of *Xemxaus*'s (I, p. 316) party at Kimsquit, another was *Olqdimut* who came with *scyayayai* (I, p. 329). These heralds functioned in the manner of their descendants of today; others of the first chiefs appointed certain of their relatives to perform this service, and by means of the power with which they were endowed, created names with respect to their functions. Besides his ordinary name every herald must have an ancestral appellation of some kind, as well as the probability of possessing *kusiut* ones in addition to those of a professional nature. Either by bringing with them from above, or by creation on this earth, each group of first settlers became provided with a herald, whose name is embodied in the ancestral myth describing their experiences. As each of the first heralds died, his name was passed to a successor, and this practice has been carried out from generation to generation until the present. The Bella Coola state that no new names for heralds have been created since the time of the first people, and it is certain that none has been made for many years. Consequently, the number of heralds is strictly limited in accordance with mythological beliefs, and every man who owns one of the ancient designations embodied in an origin myth knows the name of the herald associated with his first namesake. 203 773 551 [428]

At the death of a herald his name becomes dormant. Since heralds function at all ceremonies, whether or not the donor belongs to the same ancestral family as themselves, the members of the group sustaining the loss are not deprived of their 203 553 556* 614 424

203 553 *556 614 [H24] services. Now the box, one of their prized prerogatives, the visible embodiment of an element in their ancestral myth, is no longer present. In such circumstances, no member of an ancestral family would give a potlatch unless able to confer at it the dormant name on a new herald. The intending donor usually consults with the senior members of the ancestral family as to a suitable incumbent, or especially if he is an influential chief, he may simply use his own discretion. In either case, some relatively young member of the ancestral family is offered the post. If he accepts, the matter is settled; if not, another is invited in his stead. The new herald cannot function until his name and appointment have been validated by the distribution of presents at the potlatch. Such gifts are not returnable, since they are held to "have become nothing" for the name. Relatively lavish expenditure for this purpose is one of the many ways in which a chief is able to show his prowess and generosity. Thus established, a herald can carry out his duties thenceforth. He functions at every ceremonial, but especially at potlatches given by members of his own ancestral family, in whose origin myth his own name is embodied. From [627] [796] constant participation in all kinds of ceremonials, a herald becomes conversant with every type, and is appealed to as arbiter in difficult points of ritual, thus adding to his reputation.

203 *556 Although acceptance of the post of herald somewhat curtails a man's activities in other respects, instances are known of energetic ones using the gifts received to establish themselves as chiefs, passing on their herald names at the same time to other incumbents. More often, a herald uses his wealth for the benefit of a son or other relative, being satisfied with his own status in the community. He takes a prominent part in every ceremony and is a person of some standing, yet is spared the responsibility of actually giving rites himself, a position which offers many attractions to a man lacking great ambition and initiative.

[illegible]
[illegible]

Totem-Poles

A feature embodied in many ancestral myths is a description of the totem-pole[1] erected by a group of the first people, either according to a design given them by *Alkuntam*, or in consequence of their experiences on this earth. It is the privilege of a chief descended from that group to erect such a pole, under the same restrictions as apply to the portrayal and use of other features belonging, not to him individually, but to the ancestral family as a whole. Totem-poles are also frequently erected to depict incidents connected with the ancestors of a chief, even if there is no mention of one in his ancestral myth. In either case, the setting-up is a source of pride to the chief, especially as it emphasizes the importance of his ancestors, and its display must be duly validated. Theoretically, this may be done at a gathering of less importance than a potlatch, but in practice it occurs at no other ceremony, since a chief wealthy enough to erect a pole naturally desires it to be seen by as many persons as possible. 211 [illegible]

Poverty limits the number of totem-poles, but is not sufficient to account for their relative rarity. It is a matter of pride for a chief in whose ancestral myth there is mention of a pole to erect one, but all myths do not include totem-poles. Consequently the absence of one before the door of the chief's house is not proof of the owner's poverty or lack of importance. This matter was investigated with great care, and all the older people reiterated that the number and size of their poles were never as great as among the northern tribes. [771]

When a chief is preparing for a potlatch, he allots, among other carpentry tasks, the construction of a totem-pole, if he is sufficiently wealthy to reward the artisan and to validate the erection in the customary manner. If a special design is embodied in the ancestral myth containing the name which he is about to assume, or to make strong, he indicates that design to the carpenter. In the story of *Älkwi* (I, p. 312), for [532]

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[1] [illegible], "Outside Post."

[illegible]

[illegible]

211 example, there is a description of his totem-pole with a bell at the top, and beneath it an eagle's nest containing two fledglings towards which a grizzly bear is endeavouring to climb. This is the only known instance of a pole on which the different figures stand in definite relationship to one another. No explanation is offered beyond the statement that this was the form used by *[illegible]* in the beginning of time. Another ancestral pole, used by one of the ancestral families of [illegible], consists of a simple shaft surmounted by a sphere; this represents a mountain which enters into their ancestral myth as supporting the sky.

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As with all features embodied in ancestral myths, a chief can use his own discretion in cases where he has a choice of design. A totem-pole with specific figures is a common present from a chief to his son-in-law, and it is a mark of respect for the latter to use and validate this at the first opportunity, in preference to one belonging to his own ancestral family. Since the pole erected at a potlatch may have no association with the ancestral name and myth of the donor, the underlying principle in all cases is that the value of the pole depends upon the quantity of gifts distributed to validate its erection. One man mentioned an instance in which he had become confused with regard to the proper design for the totem-pole connected with his ancestral myth, and had used one belonging to a second myth in association with a name from the first. Both were his property, the transaction was duly validated, and the matter passed off without question. It is possible that the decay of custom which has followed the coming of the white man may have been partly responsible for this error, which was regarded as a somewhat stupid, though not improper mistake; yet it is clear that even when designs are remembered as portions of ancestral myths, they can be alienated from them and validated as isolated objects in the same manner as names and all other features of ancestral myths.

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More often, the exact details of a pole are not included in the ancestral myth and a chief wishing to have one erected can

on his own discretion as to the design. At the top he always 211
places the bird or animal cloak in which his first ancestor, 556*
[illegible], came to this earth. Beneath this is the 771
cloak of his mother's first ancestor if it differs from his father's.
There are no fixed rules for other representations. Sometimes 532
a man wishes to display the cloaks of the first ancestors of his
wife, or wives; more often, the designs are of creatures with [778]
which his own ancestors came in contact after reaching this earth.[1] One of the first settlers, *[illegible]* (I, p. 335), married a Bella Bella woman from whom he obtained a ceremony connected with a whale, an animal which has often been used on the totem-poles of his descendants. The lower figures on totem-poles often represent creatures from which a recent ancestor of the chief obtained supernatural assistance. Consequently, the number of designs which may be used is legion, and the order of portrayal is immaterial. Moreover, Bella Coola art is not sufficiently realistic for designs to be easily recognized, nor is there standard conventionalization of little used animals; so it follows that the designs on totem-poles are often unidentifiable.[2] This is of little consequence, since their value rests neither upon the artistic skill exhibited, nor even upon their significance in connection with the owner's ancestral myth, but upon the goods expended to validate the display.

All Bella Coola totem-poles are carved from the trunks of [824]
huge cedars, with the wood cut away so that the designs stand
out in high relief. The carvers are allowed great latitude both [184]
in choice of form and colouring, hence there is wide variation

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[1] [illegible] is the term applied to animals with which ancestors came in contact, other than their cloaks. [825]

[2] This statement represents the layman's point of view, that is, of the Bella Coola who was not himself a carpenter-sculptor. It is probable that an expert would have greater facility in recognizing the conventionalized forms used by his associates, although the whole pattern of Bella Coola culture was opposed to extreme standardization. [184] Unfortunately, wood-carving, in fact art work of every kind, had degenerated to such an extent that only one man with any recognized skill in that respect was still living when this study was made. [182] He was both unreliable and uncooperative, so that it was impossible even to collect examples of his work, still less to record his interpretations of the designs of masks or other objects carved by his predecessors. [115]

211 in the appearance of the poles. Sometimes one is erected at
# 556 the front door of the house with an opening at its base through
778 which all must pass to enter the house, or a pole may be solid
532 and stand on the opposite side of the sidewalk; the choice in
[184] either case depending upon the usage recorded in the ancestral myth. Instead of a totem-pole, a chief may display his ancestral claims by means of paintings on the front wall of his house, or by carved house-posts supporting the longitudinal beams, if such had been used by his ancestors. Moreover, a chief entitled to display a totem-pole may choose to use only paintings. If he validates these by potlatch, they give him the same dignity and importance as a totem-pole, particularly if he cannot validate its construction by lavish gifts. Most Bella Coola poles are only about fifteen to twenty feet in height, and though [171] it is possible that a few families had prerogatives entitling them to construct lofty poles, such as used by the Haida, it is unlikely that such were ever common.

When a chief who has erected a totem-pole before his house gives another potlatch, he may wish to put up a second pole beside the first. Occasionally two or three poles stand before the house of a chief, but one is more frequent or even none at all. [764] At death the pole is often taken to the cemetery where it acts as a memorial-post (I, p. 461). Otherwise it remains standing until some other occupant of the house wishes to erect another in its place, when the first is pulled down and neglected.

Coppers

# 556 [969] The Bella Coola use coppers for only two purposes: casting on the ground upon which the representation of a deceased relative had trodden, or throwing into the fire when the figure has left the house. In either case, they are said to "make bone for the dead." Although used but rarely, the occasion when a copper is employed is so important that to obtain one and increase its value is a vital consideration for every chief.

[177 439] Most of the coppers now used by the Bella Coola are made

of metal obtained from the white man, if not actually machine-made for trading purposes. They resemble the familiar shape found in all parts of the British Columbia coast and vary in length from about six inches to as much as three feet. There is considerable difference in thickness, some of the newer ones are thin plates, others are heavy and appear to be old. The early white traders realized the value placed by the Indians on their coppers and these were soon imitated and became important articles of barter. The Bella Coola state that many of the early Hudson's Bay Company's coppers were made of drawn wire, but this type seems to have passed out of existence, since all the specimens seen in Bella Coola consisted of flat metal plaques. 556 * 177 434

The Bella Coola maintain that their ancestors have, ever since the beginning of time, used two kinds of coppers. One variety, known as *talo*, resembled the plaques produced by white men. This is the term in common usage for all kinds of coppers at the present time. The other variety, *taitaimy*, is said to have been thicker and heavier and was made by heating the metal in a fire, beating it into the required shape. Long, long ago, coppers of this kind were sometimes found in the forest by hunters who were thus rewarded for observance of ceremonial chastity, but most were obtained in trade from the northern tribes. One of these is said to be preserved at Kimsquit, but none is said to have been owned by a Bella Coola within the last few years. 556 * [325] [434]

The Bella Coola believe that *taitaimy* can only be manufactured in one district, far to the north, at the mouth of an unknown river. There, it is said, the chiefs range themselves along the river bank, each armed with a spear, and each with a number of slaves behind him. When the tide is highest, salmon of some peculiar kind appear at the surface of the water. If one comes within reach of a spearman, he lunges at it, but invariably misses; then the chief drops his spear, seizes one of his slaves and kills him by cutting his throat. A small piece of 552 * 773 [illegible] flesh cut from the body is fastened to the point of the spear, making it so potent that when next the chief lunges at a salmon he transfixes it and brings it ashore. He roasts the fish at a fire and then pounds it on a stone until it becomes a copper.

No Bella Coola has visited this distant river for many generations and the belief concerning the manufacture of *[illegible]* appears to have been handed down from dim antiquity. Coppers of this kind are said to have been considered much more valuable than the usual *[illegible]*, but were always uncommon. In addition to their ordinary uses, they had a certain curative value. If the owner of one was ill, he used to clean it [775] with a rough stone and water, then he would drink four cupfuls of the liquid which contained minute fragments of metal. In almost every case a speedy recovery followed. In all other respects *[illegible]* or *[illegible]* could be used indiscriminately.

[illegible] are likewise said to have a supernatural origin. When found in the forest, they are due to the supernatural salmon- [776] like being, *[illegible]*, having changed itself into one. None has been found in recent years because the *[illegible]* have moved away owing to their dislike of the smell of human footsteps and the taint of smoke.

These stories serve to emphasize the complete ignorance of [325] the Bella Coola concerning the methods of manufacturing coppers. It is possible that long ago they were able to make their own by pounding the native metal, but if so it is surprising that some traditions to this effect were not preserved. [177] On the other hand, there is little reason to doubt their use of coppers, obtained from the northern tribes, antedating the coming of the whites. All informants agreed on this point, and the frequent references to coppers in mythology likewise point to considerable age. In many of the ancestral myths there are accounts of the obtaining of coppers by some of the [551] first people, and many ancestral names, both of men and women, are derived from them.

[237] The Bella Coola attribute the value of coppers to the fact

of their occurrence in some ancestral myths.[1] There seems to be no mythological explanation for the casting of a copper into the fire after the passing of the representation of a deceased relative, but the desire of chiefs to use them at potlatches is the result of their use under similar circumstances by their ancestors. Some ancestral myths lack reference to coppers, but their use is common to all, whether or not embodied in myth. It is said to be easier for a chief to acquire coppers if they had been used by his ancestors, but this is not essential. 554* 773 [764]

When arranging for the appearance of a dead relative, the donor of a potlatch is careful either to possess a copper, or to be able to borrow one at the right moment. As soon as the masked figure has disappeared, the donor stands up, breaks or bends his copper, and throws it into the fire "to make heat for the deceased." No matter how valuable a copper may have been, it is now worthless; its value has been expended on the purpose for which it has just been employed. It has collected in the flames, a valueless article belonging to no one. 554* 764

At some convenient time, either hours or days later, any chief may remove the copper and give it to a poor man, only taking care to choose an individual who has not recently received one. It is said that the gift is "to patch his canoe." It is now the poor man's property, but it has no value, since no goods have been expended for it. The new owner straightens and repairs it, if necessary by riveting on the broken piece, thus making it ready for further use. The poor man may keep the copper for years, or it may be only a few weeks before some chief, preparing for a potlatch, offers, perhaps, $20, for it. In the old days, values were computed in slaves, canoes, salmon, and other commodities, but now in dollars. If two chiefs should happen to want it, the poor man may haggle about the price, though in such a case the two rivals would probably agree amicably rather than lower their dignity by seeming to be interested in a matter of money. It is to the advantage of a 556* [735] [125] 435 554* 437

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[1] Abalone-shells and sea-otter skins are treasured for the same reason; the former are mentioned in several origin myths, the latter in two at least. [237]

C

[illegible] lavishly, since the value of the copper depends on the amount expended on it.

The fee received by the poor man must not be casually spent. He is expected to invite the whole village to his house, otherwise he would never again be given coppers. The heralds call everyone to the house, the singers' council being the first to arrive. They beat out the [illegible] of anyone, to which the owner dances; the songs are used one after another, until almost every member of the society has stood. *Sisaok* songs may then be used in the same way. Since the supernatural beings are not present, the rite has no religious significance; it is merely a social affair. At the close of the dancing, the poor man distributes food to all, equivalent in value to the money received. It is probable that new men sometimes give away slightly less than they have received, although any noticeable laxity in this would be punished by the receipt of no further coppers. The recipient of a copper from a fire derives no direct gain from it, though it is to his indirect advantage, since a person who has given away food is likely to receive larger presents on future occasions than one who has not.

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556 Meanwhile the chief owning the copper is unable to use it at his potlatch since the value, dependent on the goods expended for it, is only $20, a sum so small that to use it would be insulting to his dead ancestors. There are several ways of increasing its value:

[559] (1) *By Painting.* Taking advantage of some ceremony when a number of people are present, the owner gives a carpenter $10, for example, with a request that he paint on his copper a representation of the crest used by his, the owner's, first ancestor, when coming to this earth. Henceforth the value of the copper is $30.

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556 (2) *By Naming.* The Bella Coola say that among the Kwakiutl names are given to almost all coppers; in Bella Coola it is a rare practice. Occasionally, a chief creates a name for his copper and validates this by presents to all the

village at some ceremony, exactly as a child's name is conferred. 435
Designations are chosen with respect to the appear- 552
ance of the copper, or some incident connected with its history. 556*
Such a designation is [illegible], "Begrimed," applied to a
copper thrown many times into the fire. If, for instance, $50
be expended for a name, the value of a $30 copper is henceforth
$80.

(3) *By Making Gifts.* The owner of a copper can increase 435
its value by calling together the other chiefs of his village, and
sometimes of adjacent ones as well. After the customary meal, 556*
the owner expounds the history of his possession, giving details
of its value. Then he passes it to one of his guests, who, unless [578]
he wishes to insult his host, must hold it upright, that is, with
the broad end uppermost. The owner gives it in turn to each
of his guests. To validate the display, the owner must bestow
gifts on all present, and the total value of these is added to the
value of the copper. Such gifts are not strictly returnable, [426]
although it is customary for chiefs to show their generosity
and prowess to their fellows by a later repayment with interest.

By these means the original purchaser of a worthless copper
can increase its value to such a point that it can be used at a
potlatch. There is no established custom about this. Coppers [171]
are not as valuable in Bella Coola as, for instance, at Fort
Rupert, and it is unlikely that any are ever worth more than
$300, and the average value is probably between $150 and
$200. Considerable time is required to raise the value of a
copper to this sum and the owner in many cases finds that he
has all the other requirements before his copper is ready for
use. In that case, he tries to buy another which has been 435
raised to sufficient worth by its owner. Everyone knows the 437
values of the different coppers in the community, and the
intending purchaser calls his fellow-chiefs to his house and 556*
offers to buy one valued, for example, at $150. If the owner
consents to sell, he usually endeavours to get as much as possible, perhaps $175. The sum is publicly paid and is henceforth the value of the copper, which is transmitted to the new

[illegible]

[illegible]

435 437 # 556 [177] [178] owner with a statement of its history and the amount expended on it. The purchase of a copper is, therefore, a good business transaction, and it might be assumed that a chief with keen commercial instinct would endeavour to acquire as many as possible. This is said to be the case in Fort Rupert, but in Bella Coola public opinion is averse to the obtaining of coppers unless for use at potlatches. As every ambitious chief hopes to give potlatches, he can always claim that the acquisition of a copper is for this end, and that the sale of it is from a kindly desire to assist a fellow-chief who is nearer the desired goal than he himself. Consequently, the sale of coppers is tolerably common, and a chief is not considered to be mercenary unless he sells too frequently.

426 # 556 The intending donor of a potlatch can now proceed to the ceremony, secure in the possession of a copper worthy to be thrown on the fire after the passage of his deceased relative. In addition, he may own another copper of too small value for this purpose. As described in the last chapter, he repeatedly calls together the inhabitants of his own village to rites which he validates by the distribution of presents, and at which he also gives away investment presents. He may decide to use his second copper for this purpose. All investment presents, [558] which are given only to men of standing in the community, must be repaid with interest unless the recipient is willing to decline in popular estimation; but when a gift of this kind consists of a copper, a return of 100 per cent is expected on the transaction. Bestowal of a copper in such circumstances is not spoken of as an investment present, *kalámkacnám*, but as *âwasep'*, which has the definite significance of something that must be returned with 100 per cent interest. If the value of the copper were $25 before this bestowal, it is now $50, since the new owner must repay this amount to the chief planning to give the potlatch. The new owner can use the copper in any way he desires; if he repays a previous indebtedness, he cancels $50 by giving it; whereas if he bestows it as *âwasep'*, announcement is made that its value is $50, and he expects to

receive $100 in return. The last sum is now the value of the copper. This second bestowal may take place before the owner has paid the $100 that he owes to the original possessor. There is no time limit to Bella Coola debts since it adds to the debtor's prestige to pay off his indebtedness, publicly of course, when his creditor is giving a ceremony of any kind. At every change in ownership announcement is made of the history of the copper and of its value at every stage of its existence. In this way the worth of a copper increases until it is fit to be thrown into the fire after the passing of a dead kinsman. When one that has been used as dowry is at last cast into the flames, and later rescued from them, it is customary for the new owner to use it once more as dowry. On the other hand, a copper that has been raised to value by the gift of a name, painting, and so forth, is normally again revalued in the same way when rescued from oblivion. There is no definite rule about this; it is only a tendency. 426 556* 425 556*

The value of a copper acquired from either a white man or a member of a foreign tribe is equivalent to its purchase price, and can be raised in any one of the ways employed for one that has been thrown into a fire.

In many cases the donor of a potlatch prefers not to be the actual possessor of a copper at the time of the entry of his deceased relative, though he always arranges to obtain one. When the masked figure has disappeared, the donor stands up and says: 426 556*

"I have nothing to make bone for my ancestor. Chief So-and-so, please give me your copper."

The chief so called upon transmits the copper with a statement of its value and the recipient throws it into the fire. Nothing is said about repayment, but the transaction has been public and everyone realizes that the chief must repay with 100 per cent interest when the seller gives his next ceremony. In this way the donor is able to use a copper without having had to pay for it at an inconvenient time when he needs all his wealth to give to his foreign guests. A chief often sells a copper [432] [435]

435 immediately before, or during the early stages of a potlatch, in
#556 order to receive goods immediately, but with the proviso that
it shall be returned to him for throwing into the fire. This
[illegible] method has the advantage of providing the chief with goods
[426] when required, and doubles the worth of the copper.

Coppers are not always rescued from the ashes and given
to poor men. If one is still lying in the fire after several days,
[764] the donor of the potlatch removes it and fastens it to the
memorial post over the grave of his deceased relative. It may
be left there, or another chief wanting a copper may buy it
from the donor and increase its value in the usual manner.
Only a small price is paid in such circumstances, since the
copper, having served its purpose, is practically valueless.

177 The Bella Coola state that in ancient times coppers were
435 worth less than at present, and that the change in sentiment
regarding them is due to Kwakiutl influence. All agree that
#556 the value placed upon them at Fort Rupert and Alert Bay is
greater than elsewhere on the coast. The Bella Coola believe
that the Kwakiutl distribute presents in respect to their coppers
and that their values mount to enormous sums when the
gifts are returned. It is clear that the importance of coppers,
like the potlatch and other elements of culture, has increased
in recent years through the influence of the coastal tribes.

#556 It is almost impossible to define coppers in the nomenclature
of economic theory. They are not mere articles of
barter, since they have no practical use outside the ceremonies
of chiefs. Nor are they standardized units of trade or currency,
[436] since each differs not only from all other coppers, but
also at different periods. In a sense they serve as tokens of
[211] what has been expended; representations of them may be
carved and painted on totem-poles where they serve as marks
[532] of the goods which the chief has given away, but this is only
a minor consideration. A copper can perhaps best be described
[426] as an investment which can be applied only to one purpose,
"the making of bone for a deceased" person. It grows more
[435] valuable at every transmission in accordance with the goods ex-

pended, so that it serves as a visible and tangible memorandum 556*
of the chief-like generosity of its owner. By means of these [435]
media, debts are passed from one individual to another without [434]
actual liquidation in goods; in fact, it is unlikely that the Bella
Coola possess sufficient money to meet the sums represented by
their coppers.

PROFESSIONAL PREROGATIVES

The importance of prerogatives in the lives of the Bella 424
Coola has already been noted in many connections. A man's
name is his only because his ancestral family has the preroga- 556*
tive of using that designation; a *kusiut* dance can be performed
only by an individual with the necessary prerogative; specific
totem-pole designs, the portrayal of bird or animal on spoons, [322]
mats, house-posts, and other objects is a right dependent upon
an ancestral prerogative, as is also the area on which a man
can hunt or fish. The concept colours all Bella Coola life.
Not only is a man's ceremonial life based on this principle, but [776]
on it depend his actions as chief, and the economic sources of
his food-supply. No prerogative, even though it be the pro-
perty of a man, is effective until validated by the distribution [431]
of presents. Much of a man's energy throughout life is ex-
pended on the validation and display of his prerogatives; most [627]
Bella Coola feuds are caused by the infringement of one indi-
vidual on another's rights. [578]

In addition to the various types already mentioned, there 424
are a number of professional prerogatives on which depend a
man's vocation. That of herald approximates this class, al- 463
though the Bella Coola consider it rather as a right operative 556*
only during ceremonials. Professional prerogatives rest on
the belief that a man's ability as a hunter, wood-worker, and
so forth does not rest in his innate skill, but upon an inherited
right which must be confirmed and validated by the distri-
bution of presents. These can be given at any convenient
time when the people have been called together, but, as it is
to the man's advantage to have his right made known as widely

424 as possible, a potlatch is the most suitable occasion. Goods
463 distributed for this purpose are not returnable; they have
*556 "become nothing" in the acquisition. The value of presents so
bestowed differs enormously; a man who is proud of his prerogative
validates it lavishly until he is strong in his vocation,
whereas another establishes himself on a lesser scale. The origin
[773] of professional rights, like so many of other kinds, is lost in
antiquity and ascribed to the wishes of *Alquntäm* as expressed
to the first people. Some of the early settlers came to earth
[551] with definite duties and vocations, each indicated by a special
name; others, lacking these, created them through their own
enormous power. At the death of one of these incumbents,
424 his name passed to one of his relatives who acted in the same
463 manner as his predecessor after duly validating the name in
553 question. Ever since that time, the owner of a confirmed professional
name has been able to perform the functions of the
*556 prerogative. This is never a man's sole designation, but merely
[551] an addition to those of ancestral, *kusiut*, *sisauk*, and other
types. Like them, professional names are usually willed by
their owners, though if this is neglected, one can be revived by
any member of the deceased's ancestral family. In such a case,
the older people usually decide on a suitable incumbent and
suggest the matter to him; if he does not accept, the opportunity
is given to another. If a member of the group is eager
to validate the name, it is unlikely that anyone would try to
[789] forestall him. Ability in certain respects can also be obtained
by magical means (I, p. 701), and a member of the ancestral
family so endowed is the natural choice for the prerogative in
question.

Prerogatives of this kind can be grouped according to the types of vocation included.

THE PROFESSION OF RIVER GUARDIAN

424
463 In the beginning of time, *Alquntäm* is said to have sent
551 down with *Q̣oil*, who landed on the mountain behind *Q̣omqo·ts*,
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1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948
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a name, or *mnaaia*, with the prerogative of enforcing obedience 424
to river taboos. Ever since, the owner of this name, when it 463
has been duly legalized, has had the right to perform this func- 551
tion. In some cases, such as carpenters and singers, the valid- 693
ation of a prerogative has not brought with it the necessary [793]
ability, so that the incumbent remains a properly ratified, but
non-functioning, craftsman. No mechanical skill is required
by a River Guardian, hence the owner of the name or *mnaaia*
has always been able to perform his duties.

From time immemorial certain restrictions have been en- 784
forced concerning the river: No refuse may be thrown in, 825
otherwise the olachen would remain in the ocean. For the 226
same reason, women at certain periods are not allowed to bathe [515]
lest a speck of blood should blind the fish and prevent them [841]
from seeing the route. Occasionally an olachen with red eyes [562]
is caught; this is caused by some heedless woman. When the
fish are running in the river, women are not allowed on the
bank, nor to repair the nets. At high tide, it is forbidden to
drive stakes for olachen nets.

The number of prohibitions increases during the critical
period of the salmon run. Then no freshly hewn planks can [502]
be set afloat, and even a canoe which has just been completed
must be kept for ten days before launching. No one whose [765]
husband or wife has died within the last year can embark at
the village, but must proceed to a landing-place at the head of
the fiord. Most important of all, refuse of salmon must be
deposited in the woods; if thrown into the river, the fish would
smell it and avoid the stream. Even accidents such as the
upsetting of a canoe, or the spilling of olachen grease, are considered to be offences.

Disregard of any of these injunctions is displeasing to the 688
salmon and it is the duty of the River Guardian to punish the 693
offender, irrespective of his rank. In case of slight infringements, he beats the guilty person or throws him into the river. The guilty person usually scrambles out, but should he be swept away and drowned, no recompense can be claimed by

688 693 [177] his relatives. This punishment is customary in cases of the upsetting of a canoe. Death is the penalty for throwing refuse into the river, particularly during the summer, and until the coming of the white man the River Guardian exacted it without hesitation.

THE PROFESSION OF UTTERING A DRONING CRY

424 551 [575] [463] [491] [773] At the appearance of masked figures representing supernatural beings, whether in *sisauk* or *kusiut* dances, many of the women repeatedly utter a peculiar, high-pitched, droning cry which adds considerably to the weirdness and impressiveness of the occasion. Ability to do this depends on an ancestral prerogative duly confirmed by the distribution of presents. Many ancestral myths describe how some of the first women were given by *Alquntäm*, or acquired in other ways, the right to drone, and mention is made of the name used by each with respect to this prerogative. Unlike the one previously described, many of the first women possessed this privilege, which is accordingly common at the present time. A name [553] of this type is usually conferred in girlhood, sometimes even in infancy, and being of relatively slight importance may be validated at a ceremony of less dignity than a potlatch. One of these names is *Nanaqmetsldaipas-a*, which has reference to [773] the blue-green sheen of some abalone-shell brought from the east by Raven in the beginning of time, as described in the ancestral myth in which this name is included. For many [178] years there has been considerable laxity with regard to this prerogative, and women lacking it have even been urged to drone in order to add to the solemnity of the occasion and to increase the wonder of the uninitiated.

424 767 463 773 There is another similar prerogative, enabling the incumbent to drone at mourning ceremonies. In the beginning of time, *Smaxus* of Kimsquit married *Tlitkwaiil*, the daughter of a Bella Bella chief, who had this right. It has since been transmitted from one of her descendants to another at Kimsquit.

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quit. Details of this prerogative were not obtainable, but it 769
seems to follow the general type. 463

THE PROFESSION OF FIRST BERRY PICKER

All women can pick berries, but in every village there is at 222
least one who has the prerogative of picking the first of every
kind. The origin of this right is lost in dim antiquity, but, 424
like all others, each first berry picker has a special professional [463]
name embodied in her ancestral myth which must be duly
validated before she can function. One of these is *Sitcwaswat-* [551]
nimán·a, another is *Lo'yo*. Though normally reserved for
women, one of these names is occasionally given to a male [562]
child, in which case it is said to have been hermaphroditized.
No one would dare to pick berries until the legal picker has
paraded up and down the sidewalk carrying on her back her [532]
picking basket decorated with a representation of the sun, an [789]
act which is believed to ripen the berries.

"Get ready to pick red elderberries [or whatever species is ripe] tomorrow," she keeps calling out.

The berries may then be picked by anyone. This is re- [488]
peated for every variety. As far as could be learnt, there was [183]
no social mechanism to punish a woman who picked berries
before the announcement of the official picker; obedience
seems to have been so universal that infractions are said to
have been unknown though formerly there may have been
some penalty of which even the memory has disappeared.

THE PROFESSION OF WARRIOR

The profession of warrior is another prerogative handed 701
down from the distant past and requiring validation before it [424
can be used. As with other rights of this type, magical means
are in many cases employed to make any young man brave 463
and successful, but there are a number of warriors confirmed
as such by the distribution of presents at the time of bestowal 431
on them of professional names. At the present time, it is 553]

701 difficult to estimate the former influence of such warriors. The belief of all in their ability must have given them some prestige, although the requirements of practical qualifications in fighting must often have prevented them from functioning as military leaders. In other words, a man may be, socially, a warrior, even though he lacks ability as a fighting man.

701 693 [688] [575] [428] [411] [754] The functions of warriors are not limited to fighting with enemies of other tribes. Each has the power to kill and must exercise it when requested. If a mistake is made in a ceremonial *kusiut* dance, the offender must be killed, and one way in which this is accomplished is by the senior members of the society requesting a professional warrior to act as executioner. One of these men, who lived at *Ásán·án·i*, always used a stone club which had been handed down from generation to generation, becoming the property of each new incumbent of the name and prerogative. In other cases, the killing is said to have been done with the aid of magic. The power of the *Ásán·án·i* warrior had been confirmed with so much goods that he was the most powerful professional killer known to the Bella Coola. He acted on instructions from the senior members of the *kusiut* society or when called upon by anyone. If, [684] for example, a man found that his wife had been faithless and wished to kill her lover, it was only necessary to tell the professional warrior, who was bound to act in accordance with his prerogative. He received no pay, since he was merely [582] exercising his right. The relatives of the murdered person never took revenge on the slayer, realising that he was powerless in the matter, though they frequently requested him to slay the person who had asked him to kill the first victim. He could never refuse to do so, even if the victim were his own brother, or if he knew that the person he was to kill was guiltless. The underlying principle was that this man's power had [761] been increased to such a pitch by the distribution of presents that if he failed to exercise it on demand, it would react upon himself and cause his own death. This *Ásán·án·i* warrior began in time to have an aversion for his vocation, since he

was being feared and hated by all. Yet his prerogative was so strong that he could not cease to act. He found by chance a cave near the top of precipitous Mount *Nusimauts*, not far from his village, and told everyone that he would die there, where no one would ever be able to spit or tread upon his grave. One autumn, when an old man, he disappeared, and although search parties scoured the woods for him, they were unsuccessful. Next spring, some young men visited the cave in which they found his badly decomposed corpse; the warrior had kept his promise. 701 649

The profession of warrior carries with it prohibitions and requirements other than with regard to killing. Such men are thought always to be so wild and restless that they cannot sleep at night, but prowl around the village watching for possible foes. In actual fact, warriors seldom sleep quietly throughout the night. They have one restriction of a social nature, in that they can never be confined in the back-room as initiates into the *cusiut* society. Consequently, no *kusiotem* ever comes to one of them. When one gives a potlatch, a rather beautiful song is sung for him as he remains in the central part of the house. What affiliation this brings him with the *cusiut* society is obscure. 701 [575]

It is difficult to say to what extent a professional warrior believes in his own powers, since there is, and must always have been, great individual variation. The white man finds it difficult to understand the psychology of a man who considers himself bound to kill on request, simply because presents have been distributed to make him a warrior. It must be remembered that this is one of the most pervasive features of Bella Coola life; functions of all kinds depend upon validated prerogatives, and there is no doubt that a man who has one of this kind is actually influenced to such an extent that he begins to believe in his own prowess. It was unusual for a warrior to exercise his powers as freely as did the *Asaʼlisi* man, but the Bella Coola have no difficulty in explaining this—his prerogative had been confirmed with more lavish expenditure 156 701

901 156 than that of anyone else. The Bella Coola do not rationalize in a scientific manner; if a man holds a belief firmly, he acts on it without questioning its logic. Moreover, if a professional warrior functions a number of times, this in itself is enough to strengthen his conviction that he must act henceforth in the same way. [463] It can be said with confidence that the owner of a professional prerogative has considerable belief in his own powers, that this acts on himself to render him proficient, and that the majority of the community have respect for his capabilities.

555 424 59[illegible] [463]

THE PROFESSION OF SINGER

Singing is one of the professions open to a Bella Coola either through natural ability or an ancestral prerogative. There is a constant need for men able to sing and compose songs for every kind of ceremonial, so a young man of talent has little difficulty in gaining admittance to the choir. He may even win great distinction and become recognized as the leading authority on musical matters. None the less, his success is considered to be accidental and unsubstantial, lacking the foundation that comes from the possession of a duly validated professional prerogative. A person made a singer by the latter means may be entirely unable to compose; in this case he is not a member of the choir, although he enjoys the social distinction which he has won by distributing goods to confirm his professional name. The singer most respected is he who combines with natural ability a confirmed prerogative to give substance and power to his position and compositions. [555 424 578] At the death of such an one, an effort is always made by the members of his ancestral family to transmit the name to a youth who has shown musical promise. Arguments and differences of opinion are common among the members of the choir and in such cases the self-assurance and influence of a man whose position has been made strong by the distribution of presents often outweighs that of one who can rely only on his actual ability.

THE PROFESSION OF CARPENTER 335

As with singers, there are many carpenters who ply their 424
trade without the advantage of an ancestral prerogative. They, 463
also, may be expert and receive credit for their skill, but they
can never achieve quite the distinction that comes to a man 555
who has been made a carpenter by the distribution of presents.
The latter may be so clumsy with tools that no one would ever
trust him to make a canoe, or even a mask; but he is, socially,
a carpenter, whereas a skilled artisan lacking a prerogative is
admired for his ability but has no foundation of social esteem.
In transmitting a professional carpenter's name, however, an [553]
effort is always made to give it to a youth with a bent in that
direction.

The most esteemed carpenters are those who can make 335
canoes, a trade which requires no special prerogative. In the 773
beginning of time, *Yulätimut* was the canoe-maker *par excellence;* he assisted many of the first people, and no one can have
a professional prerogative as carpenter unless this supernatural
being appears in his ancestral myth. The Bella Coola ascribe [829]
the skill of the Bella Bella in carpentry to the fact that *Yulätimut* married a Bella Bella woman in the early period of the
world and that many of that tribe are his descendants. In the 335
old days, before the coming of the white men, carpenters were
always respected as esteemed members of the community. [554]
Chiefs always cared for them, and they received abundant food
at every ceremonial. None the less, they were not wealthy,
and only in recent years, since the Bella Coola have realized [777]
the value put upon good craftsmanship by the white men, has
it become customary to give valuable presents to carpenters.
Ceremonially, they have considerable influence, since the carpenter who makes a mask usually decides who shall wear it and [532]
takes charge of the fitting and adjustment. He is also held
responsible for any accident such as its falling when in use
or for mechanical defects.

224
THE PROFESSION OF HUNTER

424 Another profession which is entered by means of an ances-
[463] tral prerogative is that of hunting. Many Bella Coola have
validated their right to this vocation, some by confirming
names created by their early ancestors, others by legalizing
those brought down from above in the beginning of time.
[551] One of the latter is *Lalaimkila*, "The Brusher Off," so-called
because the owner is such a successful hunter that he can
sweep mountain goats from the mountains as easily as an
ordinary person can brush insects from a wall. Unlike the
professions of carpenter and singer, it is believed that legal-
ization of a hunter's name always brings success to the holder;
[555] perhaps because everyone is more or less successful, it follows
that whatever good fortune is achieved by a professional hunter
[556] can be attributed to the validation of his prerogative. Others,
lacking this assistance, may be proficient, but their success
never carries with it the social prestige gained by a man who
has distributed goods to substantiate the prerogative.

224 There is a difference of opinion among the Bella Coola as
424 to whether or not certain hunting methods are inheritable pre-
184 rogatives. With the introduction of rifles, these have long
[177] been discontinued, and no definite information was obtained
regarding the social position of their users. Several of the
older men believed that the contrivances depended upon an-
cestral prerogatives, whereas others stated that they were
merely individual discoveries which could have been, and in
many cases were, imitated by anyone. It seems probable that
most of the following practices are prerogatives, although it
may be that they are no more than special hunting devices
suitable only in certain areas and, therefore, limited to the
members of the ancestral family owning that particular
locality.

223 The method about which the most definite information was
424 obtained, was one formerly employed by a certain *Nusqalqiq*
to catch geese at *Tál·ia*. According to one elderly Bella Coola,

this practice had been handed down with the name from the 223 beginning of time; another man stated that it was no prerogative [424] and could be used by anyone. The best time for hunting was at the equinoxes, and *Nuspalpiq* always observed [785] ceremonial chastity in such a way that it terminated at that date. Before setting out, the hunter prepared a net of the shape shown in the accompanying sketch (Fig. 1). The net was stretched over a wooden framework, about ten feet long and four feet wide, counterbalanced by a long and heavy handle. The whole affair was called, "The House-like Thing." Choosing a still night, the hunter used to set out in his canoe paddled by a number of assistants. *Nuspalpiq* would place himself in the bow with his net, and in the middle of the craft a small fire was kept burning with [372] resinous sticks piled beside it so that it could be kindled into bright flames at a moment's notice. As the canoe was slowly paddled along the shore, the geese were half attracted, half repelled by the light. Unwilling to take to flight, they used to swim around at the edge of the illumination and so were guided into some narrow opening of the shore. Then *Nuspalpiq* would throw his net so that the end farthest from the handle first touched the water and as the latter came crashing down it imprisoned a number of birds. Others, bewildered by the light and the falling net, tried to fly outwards and were knocked down by the paddlers. These were retrieved at once and the necks of those caught in the net were wrung at leisure. It is said that this method of hunting was almost always successful.

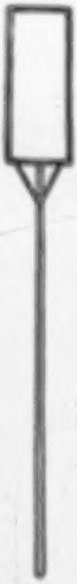

FIG. 1
Geese Net

Another *Tāl·io* hunting device which, however, was not 225 transmitted and may have been merely an individual stroke [424] of genius, not an inherited prerogative, was employed to kill seals. The last to use this method was the father's father of an elderly Bella Coola. This man used to go out at night in a

225 small ocean-going canoe, with an assistant who passed his paddle through the water in such a way that a slight phosphorescent streak resulted. This resembled the course of a salmon. In a short time a seal would rise in pursuit of the "fish," and the watchful hunter would harpoon it. The seal would rush off with the head of the weapon, which was attached by a long line to the shaft remaining in the hunter's hand. He would play it like a huge fish, until the exhausted animal was drawn to the side of the canoe and clubbed. Several seals were often obtained by this means in the course of a single night.

224 424 The two usual methods of killing mountain goats are by cornering them with dogs and then choking them to death, or by shooting with rifle or bow. There was formerly a special method of snaring which had been handed down as a prerogative from the time of the first people. The hunter used to set his snares on a precipitous path commonly used by goats and had remarkable success. Others might know how to make snares and where the hunter set them, but no one would ever attempt this method of hunting without the proper prerogative. Another right, enjoyed by another hunter, was the catching of bears in a similar way in nooses.

424 556 182 Little need be said in conclusion about these particular privileges, except to emphasize that they are merely an aspect of the principle of validated prerogatives which permeates every phase of Bella Coola life. It is as natural for a man to be made a singer or a hunter by the distribution of presents as it is for him to acquire a dance by the same means. Each is contained in an ancestral myth, and the validation of the prerogative enables the incumbent either to function actively, or at least to enjoy the social prestige attached to the craftsman who has been duly confirmed in his vocation. The necessity of bestowing gifts to validate a prerogative introduces an economic element to the concept, but this is lessened by the fact that a poor man can acquire a name by a relatively small

expenditure though he must forgo the prestige enjoyed by a 424
man who has been able to elevate his professional names in a 556
lavish manner. Selection is a constant factor in the social life 182
of a Bella Coola; the man who uses all his wealth to acquire a
firm seat cannot be "strong" in *sisaok* matters; the man who
desires to specialize in *kusiut* affairs cannot afford to display
an elaborate totem-pole. Amid these conflicting desires, it
often happens that a man somewhat neglects his professional
prerogatives, especially those of which the dignity has been
slightly lessened through superior skill shown by individuals [555]
endowed with no more than native ability. Upstarts of this [177]
kind have always infringed upon professional dignity, and the
coming of the white man has added a new factor which has
almost destroyed vocational prerogatives.

A'alk Dances

The most important, as well as the most spectacular, dances 177
that occur at potlatches are those given by members of the 535
sisaok society. In addition to these, a feature of many pot- 575
latches is the performance of *a'alk* dances.[1] As already men-
tioned, from 1870 onwards there have been many changes
in *sisaok* ritual; new elements have been acquired by the mar- [184]
riages of Bella Coola to members of the coastal tribes, with the
result that details of procedure vary at every ceremony ac- [796]
cording to the prerogatives of the dancer. Since 1910, the
influence of white civilization has increased to such an extent
that *sisaok* ceremonials have virtually been abandoned.
This took place at a time when the ritual was in transition,
a state of affairs which rendered difficult the collection of
coherent information. *A'alk* dances are associated with
sisaok, but the addition of new features to the latter was
accompanied by a decay of the former. Both societies have
now almost ceased to exist, but whereas the *sisaok* organization
was abandoned during a period of change and accretion, that [128]

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[1] Called *[illegible]* in Kimsquit.

177 of the *a'alk* came to an end when it was already waning in
535 importance. It was impossible to obtain as much detailed
575 information about the latter as was desired, and it is even
128 possible that some of the facts recorded in connection with
sisaok ceremonial really belong to *a'alk* rites.

The right to perform an *a'alk* dance depends upon a duly
424 validated ancestral prerogative of which the obvious mark is
535 an *a'alk* name. Some of the first people brought down such
designations and dances with them from above in the beginning
575 of time, a few were acquired on this earth as gifts from super-
[773] natural beings. Those who have rights of this kind form a
loose organization which may be termed the *a'alk* society.
This is closely associated both with the *sisaok* society and with
chiefs, owing to the occurrence of these three types of names
in the same ancestral myths. One member of an ancestral
[556] family may use his goods to validate his ancestral name,
another to make himself a *sisaok*, a third to become an *a'alk*,
and an important chief, endowed with ability and wealth, may
be able to do all three.

A'alk dances are less spectacular than those of either the *sisaok* or *kusiut* societies, nor are rattles or whistles used. The prerogatives of a member are limited to his name, the right to perform a certain dance, and the use of a song which commonly describes some feature of his ancestral myth. Four types of dances are considered to be *a'alk*; the methods of acquiring and using any one of these are similar, so it is unnecessary to describe the differences before the actual account of the performance of each.

556 If there is a dormant *a'alk* prerogative in the ancestral
family of the donor of a potlatch, he usually chooses to validate
575 this as one of the features of his ceremony. He first consults
his wife and other relatives to ensure that sufficient goods will
be forthcoming, and if this matter can be arranged satisfactorily, he chooses some young relative as the recipient of the dormant right. It would be most unusual for the youth selected to decline the honour. Or some man, other than the

holder of the potlatch, may wish to confirm a prerogative and 556
requests the donor to allow this to take place at his ceremony. 575
Permission is never refused, since the more incidental rites, the
greater is the prestige of the whole. The young man on whom
the name is to be confirmed is always told what is planned
for him, and his relatives instruct him what to do.

As the time for the potlatch draws near, the donor requests
the singers to prepare an *a'alk* song for the youth. The theme [533]
always deals with some incident of his ancestral story with
which the singers are already familiar. If a number of youths
are to be made *a'alk*, a song must be composed for each. The 532
carpenters are also requested to make for the initiate one, or
sometimes two, masks representing a supernatural being, either 556
human or animal, connected with the myth in which occurs 575
the *a'alk* name about to be conferred. The design is chosen by
the senior members of the ancestral family concerned; it is
usually, though not necessarily, the same as that employed by
the last incumbent of the name. If the designation about to
be confirmed is one which came down from above in the beginning
of time, the mask usually represents the guise adopted
by the first user of the name; if the prerogative were obtained
on earth, it portrays the being from whom the right was received.
These arrangements are made in secret, and are
known only to the craftsmen, the donor of the potlatch, and
his family.

On the night of *xläxtnm*, when the work for the potlatch is 556
allotted, the youth who is to be made an *a'alk* is confined
within the back-room of the house, presumably in company 575
with the *susaok* initiates, though there is ambiguity on this
point. After the general arrangements have been made, an
elderly *a'alk* whose aid has been requested, suddenly rushes
from the house as if he had heard some noise. One of the *siki*,
or an influential chief, makes some allegedly witty remark as
to why he has gone out, and then follows, taking with him the
dance head-dress belonging to the *a'alk*. This is identical with
the type worn by *susaok*, one of the many points of resemblance [184]
[535]

556 between the two societies. Presently the elderly *a'alk* returns,
575 clad in his ceremonial costume consisting of the head-gear, a
blanket, and a narrow apron from which hang deer hooves,
[184] small pieces of copper, or other jingling articles. The singers
[292] strike up his song, and he dances near the fire in a manner
depending upon which of the four dances he has the right to
[535] perform. Again the *siki* leaves the house; when he returns he announces that a *tutwinam* is coming with a song for the youth, naming the one who is to be made an *a'alk*. A moment passes, and in stalks a masked figure depicting the form taken by the first ancestor of the novice, or the being from which one of his later forefathers received an *a'alk* prerogative. Sometimes two of these beings appear. The apparition circles the fire, stops beside the singers, and chants a song to them in a low voice. Then it enters the back-room and is seen no more. Presently the singers strike up the song they have just heard. To those who are neither *a'alk* nor *sisaok* it seems that the song was brought by the supernatural visitor; in reality, it is the one previously composed by the singers and taught by them to the wearer of the mask to lend realism to the performance. The youth concealed within the back-room does not emerge on this occasion, the song is merely sung in practice. Sometimes the masked figure appears during the daytime and walks openly along the shore of the river like a foreign guest, as indeed it is said to be.

The coming of a *tutwinam* is one of the points of resem-
[184] blance between *a'alk* and *sisaok* rites. The older people agree
[178] that this has long been a feature of the former society, adopted
by the latter in recent years. The description given in this section appears to be of the original and proper use, although, as already noted, the *sisaok* have recently employed *tutwinam* for somewhat different purposes.

It is uncertain whether or not the *a'alk* novice remains secluded any longer within the back-room. In ancient times he probably did, but with the recent growth of the *sisaok* society and decline of the *a'alk*, concealment has become limited to initiates of the former organization. 556 575

No more *a'alk* dances take place during the potlatch preliminaries, but with the coming of the first group of foreign guests, the host displays as many types of dance as he is entitled to, including *a'alk* if he has the necessary prerogative. On this occasion other *a'alk*, especially relatives of the donor, give their dances, the only time that such are used at potlatches except by novices receiving names. This is repeated on the arrival of every party of guests. [178] 556 575 535

Meanwhile the novice, or novices, has been practising the proper steps for his appearance, which always occurs immediately before the entry of the masked figure representing the donor's dead relative. As already mentioned, there are four kinds of *a'alk* dances, known as *nusqwal*,[a] *llaiyākam*, *qi'apa*, and *am'lel-a*. A similar song is used for a dancer of any one of these four; the text describes some small incident of the ancestral myth in which the name occurs, such as the bringing down of the prerogative by the first incumbent in the beginning of time. At the proper moment, the singers beat this out and the audience joins them in singing it. Then the singers begin to strike rapidly on the floor with double beats, assisted by the guests who clap their hands in rapid couplets. Out comes the dancer, resplendent in his head-dress decorated with weasel skins, and women with the required prerogative begin to drone. If his prerogative is as a *llaiyākam* or *qi'apa*, he proceeds to a place beside the fire and begins to run around it, sunwise, in short mincing steps, revolving at the same time on himself. He clasps his hands behind his back and bends down, then stands upright with palms extended upwards, never ceasing to move his feet in rapid steps. This type of dance is far more violent than a *susaak* one, and the amount of energy expended by a dancer in his rapid circuits of the fire is tremendous. Never, even for a moment, are his feet quiet, while his body twists and bends in an amazing fashion. After two [533] [533]

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[a] Among the supernatural beings, the *nusqwal* is a yearling mountain goat. [776]

556 or three rounds he retires utterly exhausted. The time beaten
575 out for a *nusqwal* or *am'lala* dancer is the same. He too comes
535 near the fire and at first dances in the same manner until the
[538] singers in unison bellow out, *W'ai* , "More." With a run that ends in a crashing leap that seems to shake the floor, the performer takes his position between the fire and one of the side walls and begins to revolve furiously upon himself. His body is bent forward until it seems as if all that prevents him from falling to the floor is his hands clutched together as far as possible behind his back; while his feet move so rapidly that the short mincing steps run into each other. Gradually the beating becomes less violent, only to be followed by another cry of *W'ai* , and another rush and jump that lands the dancer behind the fire. Here he revolves once more in the same furious fashion; the same is repeated on the side of the fire opposite to the place where he first performed, and finally between the fire and the door. *Nusqwal* and *am'lala* are the most strenuous of all Bella Coola dances and the performer is glad to retire. He afterwards joins the audience. This dance entails no taboo or restrictions on the dancer.

This terminates the performance of this type of dance at a potlatch, but among the goods distributed are some to validate the name acquired by the dancer, and others to legalize his actual display.

574 The occasion on which importance and solemnity are
575 attached to *o'alk* dances is during potlatches, but they are
535 also given at other times. Most Bella Coola performances are so steeped in the presence of the supernatural that the element of enjoyment is secondary, but in the spring, after the
[796] end of the *kusiut* season and before the salmon come to the rivers, dances for pleasure are of common occurrence. A *sisaok* can call his fellows to his house and the singers beat out *sisaok* songs to which the owners dance, but the most common hosts are *o'alk*. Of course an individual may be a member of both societies, but the heralds invite the guests in his *o'alk* name. Those summoned include both members of the society

and those who are not. Any *a'alk*, provided that he has enough 574
food for a meal, can call in his neighbours, but the one who 575
usually does so is a man who has received his name a year or 535
two before the occasion.

A few days before the time selected, the host asks the 575
singers to compose a new song for him. For a *nusqwal* dancer 574
particularly, and in some cases for any one of the other three 535
divisions of the society, the text does not deal with incidents 535
connected with the host's ancestral story, but with humorous 533
or disgraceful incidents of the present time. If a man has
caught ten salmon and kept them all for himself, his miserliness [626]
is commented upon in the song; if a wife has deserted her husband for another man, the actions of the two are mercilessly ridiculed; if a chief has failed to display generosity it is likewise recorded, and reference is made to errors in dance ritual. To do this is one of the functions of a *nusqwal*, and the singers are always ready to assist him. At the same time they often add a new incident to the tune belonging to some other *a'alk* dancer so that he too will be able to perform. In this way the airs are remembered from year to year, which is different from the customary Bella Coola usage.

On the morning of the day chosen, the host asks one of the [202]
singers to beat a drum repeatedly but slowly, as a signal that
a non-ceremonial dance is about to take place. About noon, [203]
heralds go from house to house announcing who is to give the dance. In the late afternoon the people gather in the donor's house where men, women, and children seat themselves without distinction of rank, the only reserved place being that for the singers behind the fire. They beat out the host's tune and he dances to it, while the singers themselves sing the words to the amusement of the audience. Using their own discretion, they then beat out the tune of another *a'alk* and he also dances, followed in succession by a third, a fourth, and as many as the singers think fit. Sometimes the songs of *susaok* are used in a similar manner. When many have danced, the host distributes food to all his guests, not forgetting to give the largest

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574 presents to the singers and heralds who have rendered assist-
ance. Instead of dispersing immediately, the guests may remain
535 to gamble or wrestle. Since there is no solemnity attached to
[533] the affair, it is a time for indulgence in amusements of all kinds.
[525] These conclude the chief features of the *a'alk* dances. Prob-
ably they once played an important part in the lives of the
[526] Bella Coola, but with the increase in importance of the *sɪsaok*,
[178] they have decayed into little more than a form of entertainment.

A'alk ORIGIN MYTHS

551 Theoretically, every Bella Coola *a'alk* should be able to
575 record the myth in which his name is embodied, but few can
do so. Of course if a man has been able to validate both
773 ancestral and *a'alk* names from the same myth, that is his authorization for both. In many cases a myth is split, and the portion containing an *a'alk* appellation is given to some member of the ancestral family, other than the chief able to validate the most important ancestral name. In such a case, the *a'alk* can record little more than that his designation came down with a specified group of the first people. This, for example, is the explanation given by a Kimsquit *nusqwal* for his name *Sɪnxälotla* which came to earth with *Smaoan* (I, p. 332) in the beginning of time. Another Kimsquit *a'alk*, *T̃laiyākam*, whose prerogative is to perform the dance of that name, states that it was brought down by *Sinuxɛtl* (I, p. 326), who assumed the designation of *T̃laiyākam* after its performance. This early settler had the additional name of *Wi'talao*.

539 The two following origin myths were obtained in some detail:

Once,* long, long ago, *Ālquntām* came to the conclusion that it was not good for the inhabitants of the world to be afraid of supernatural beings. He decided that the best way to dispel this dread would be to arrange a marriage between his daughter, *Sɪnxan·a*, and a mortal; so he

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[115]
[177]
*Related by Mrs. Willie Mack. European elements have obviously been incorporated into the first part of this legend, though the narrator considered the whole tale to be ancient.

sent the young woman down to *Stuix*. She brought with her a small ring and told the people that her father had commanded her to marry the first mortal who succeeded in casting a stone through it. *Sinnan-a* was so lovely that all the young chiefs hastened to try their skill, but not one of them could succeed. At that time there was living at *Stuix* a poor orphan *Bo'astom*, who had been brought up by his grandmother. Like all other young men, he admired the beautiful maiden and determined to try his skill. *Bo'astom* asked his grandmother to wash and paint him preparatory to entering the contest. She was most unwilling, thinking that where chiefs had failed, there would be no hope for her grandson, but at length a friend persuaded her to give the lad a chance, and she painted his face as he had requested.

Bo'astom took two pebbles of suitable size from the river and smeared them with colour. He told the first stone to go through the air and graze the ring, and the second to pass through it. The haughty young chiefs who had failed were amused at the idea of *Bo'astom* even entering the competition, and asked him how such a lowly individual as he could aspire to the beautiful *Sinnan-a*. Paying no heed to his mockers, *Bo'astom* again whispered his instructions to the first stone and threw it. Obedient to his instructions, the pebble grazed the ring, and once more the chorus of jeers burst out:

"Ha! Ha! What else did you expect, *Bo'astom?*"

Nothing daunted, *Bo'astom* told the second stone to pass through the ring. It did so, to the amazement and chagrin of the young chiefs.

Bo'astom and *Sinnan-a* were married in due course. With his wife's help, the poor orphan became prosperous and built a fine house for himself. After a few months his wife became pregnant, and with phenomenal rapidity gave birth to a male child. The infant grew faster than a mortal, and in a few months had become a sturdy little boy. One day he asked his father to make him a bow and arrows, which *Bo'astom* did. He gave his son a large number of arrows, but the latter said that he would want many more. As his father watched, the boy shot one arrow after another into the air, but not one fell back to earth The lad asked for more arrows, which *Bo'astom* gave him after some hesitation, and these too disappeared into the sky. At length the father saw above him what appeared to be a thin rod stretching down from above; it came lower and lower until he could see that it was formed by the arrows, each one lodging in the butt of its predecessor. In response to his son's requests, *Bo'astom* made more and more arrows until the rod reached the earth.

The boy told his father that the topmost arrow was embedded in the floor of *Smaj*" and that he proposed to use the chain of shafts as a ladder

539 to climb up to visit his grandfather. *Bo'astom* did not discourage him, as his son began the ascent and soon disappeared from sight. In course of time he reached the land above and made his way to his grandfather, *Älquntäm*, who was delighted to see him. He told his visitor that he was weary of constantly carrying the sun's light, and asked him to relieve
[821] him of the duty for a time. He mentioned that on previous occasions when his wife had acted as his substitute, she, being a woman, had been shy and had hidden herself behind clouds. The boy was willing to undertake the task and listened to his grandfather's instructions; in the morning he was to use only one fire stick, a little later, two, then three, and, finally, four at midday. In the afternoon he was to decrease the number in a manner corresponding to the morning's increase.[19]

Next day *Älquntäm* went away for a holiday after entrusting his grandson with the precious fire sticks. As soon as he was alone, the malicious youth began to pile one after another on the fire, until people in the world far below were wakened at dawn by the suffocating warmth. *Bo'astom's* son threw on log after log, each increasing the heat below. The earth began to sizzle, and finally burst into flames, and the water boiled in the rivers and ocean. *Snoxwa* had realized what must be the matter as soon as she felt the great heat, so she went outside and rubbed her hand over the planks on her house. Thus protected, those within
[825] survived, although all other human beings perished. Most of the animals escaped by hiding, though the weasel failed to conceal the tip of its tail which was burnt black, a characteristic inherited by all weasels ever since. *Älquntäm* felt the heat and hurried home.

"You have done great harm to mortals," he burst out angrily. "Hence-
[825] forth you shall live on earth as a mink."

Älquntäm seized his grandson and cast him to earth in this guise.

539 The survivors of the catastrophe multiplied until the whole world
551 was repopulated from the single household. Each of them took an *a'alk*
575 name from the burning, and these have been transmitted from one to another of the descendants of each until this day. One of these, a *nusqmal* name, is *Stalpalcam*, "The Increase of the Sun's Heat through the Addition of Fire Sticks"; another, a *Sisyulam*, *smaksmalais*, "The Track of the Sun"; a third, *Skwl*, "The Charred Portion of a Half-Consumed Log."

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575 The following Kimsquit story[20] describes the obtaining of an *a'alk* prerogative in the distant past.

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[19] For another version of this tale, see Boas, p. 95.

[20] Related by Jim Pollard.

Long ago, there lived in Kimsquit a young chief who was a great 539 hunter. On one occasion, he was camping in a cave, *Anokokwilis*, on 575 the mountains when not only its roof, but the dome of the sky as well, opened so that he was able to gaze into the upper regions of space. From this manifestation of the supernatural, he took for himself the name *Ālkwi*, "The Opening of the Upper Regions," and validated it by giving [551] valuable presents. This name has been transmitted from generation to generation and was recently brought to the present owner by his wife. With it is the prerogative of distributing potlatch gifts outside the house [424] since the first *Ālkwi* claimed that the sky itself was his only ceiling.

A few years after *Ālkwi* had had this experience, he and his three brothers left Kimsquit by canoe to hunt mountain goats at *Suwalk*. To their surprise, a gull perched on the bow of their canoe; they did not scare it away, thinking it indicated a manifestation of the supernatural. At intervals it left its perch and circled around the canoe, but soon returned. As they neared the landing-place, the gull flew ashore and changed into a yearling mountain goat. *Ālkwi* told his brothers, of whom the second was named *Ālkwa* and the third *O'mlātl*, that he believed this to be a further visitation of the supernatural to himself and that he would investigate it, and later meet them at *Anokokwilis*.

Ālkwi leapt ashore and followed the yearling goat. Wherever the road was rough, his strange guide travelled slowly so that his human companion could follow him. At length they came to a deep chasm with sheer walls about six feet apart, and a ledge running along one side. *Ālkwi* followed the goat along this, until the animal leapt across the gorge, struck the face of the precipitous rock, and vanished. It was clear that he had passed into the interior of the mountain and the chief could hear the distant sound of a drum.

"I can die but once," he said to himself.

Then the brave hunter leapt across the chasm, struck the rock, and passed through it as if it had been tissue paper, to find himself in a vast cavern amid a large number of people. These were really animals who had gathered to await the coming of his guide, the yearling goat. The latter told him not to be afraid, that henceforth he would be under the protection of all animals and would not come to harm, no matter how often he hunted. With breathless interest, *Ālkwi* watched the performance of a *nusqemal* dance, for every yearling goat is a supernatural dancer [845] of this type. The ceremony lasted throughout the night, and next morning he set out for *Anokokwilis*, not realizing that it was really a year since he had left his brothers.

Meanwhile, though the three brothers had almost despaired of their elder's safe return, they patiently remained at their post, and after a year were overjoyed to see smoke rising from *Anokokwilis*. They hurried

539 575 to the cave and greeted their long-lost brother affectionately. Though he, too, was delighted at the reunion, he said but little, and for two days told them nothing of his experiences. They remained in camp and on the third night *Ālkwi* told his brothers that he had obtained supernatural hunting powers. The following morning the four went out and killed so many mountain goats that the cave was filled with their carcasses. Their good fortune was amazing. *Ālkwi* sent one of his brothers to invite to the cave not only the people of Kimsquit but of the whole countryside as well. While he was absent on this errand, the remaining three prepared and smoked the meat, taking care to preserve the leg bones.

Within two weeks the guests began to assemble. *Anukulwális* was a good place for a ceremony because *Ālkwi* had decorated it with paintings after its roof had opened to show him the upper regions of space.[illegible] When all the people had arrived, the host gave a mountain goat leg-bone to each, asking every recipient to beat time with it. Then *Ālkwi* danced [535] a *nusqwal* dance, imitating the one he had seen done by the goat. After performing, he unfolded the story of his adventures and finished by giving away valuable presents of smoked meat and goat grease. Thus was initiated this particular *nusqwal* dance.

In later years, *Ālkwi* had such phenomenal success in hunting that [551] by distributing the spoil he was able to create and confirm for his youngest brother the name, *Nusiakwaltmi*, "The One Who is Always Successful." This has since been transmitted from one generation to another. *Ālkwi*, [103] too, is responsible for the name of Mount *Tcepināil*, "Leg-Bones." On one occasion he killed a large number of mountain goats on the mountain and left their leg-bones, *tcepināil*, piled together near the spot. He instructed everyone to refer to the mountain by that name, which has since been done.

EARLY HISTORY OF THE SOCIETY

575 578 A few words should be said about the reputed early history of the *a'alk* society. Its members seem always to have been on the best of terms with the *sisaok*, and there is no mention of feuds between these two organizations. On the other hand, there is said to have been constant friction with members of the *kusiut* society.[illegible] The latter comprises a large number of individuals bound together by the possession of supernatural

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[532] [illegible] These paintings are said to be still in existence, and the sister of one informant claimed to have seen them.

[illegible] This point is elaborated in vol. II, chap. [illegible].

578 575 patrons and claiming to possess supernatural powers. In contrast to the *a'alk*, the *kusiut* are well organized and regulated; its members are proud of their powers, and scornful of those who lack the same. Under these circumstances, it is not difficult to understand jealousy between the two. Until relatively recent times, the *a'alk* were numerically stronger, and included some chiefs, whereas the strength of the *kusiut* society depended on the supernatural strength claimed by its members. It is true that individuals occasionally belonged to both, if they happened to possess prerogatives of both kinds, but, as a rule, the *a'alk* were young men and the *kusiut* were older people. This rivalry was formerly so intense that all who were not members of the latter society were often termed *a'alk* irrespective of whether or not they actually possessed dances of that type; Carrier Indians alone were not so designated. During the summer, members of the two societies dwelt amicably together, but during the winter, when dances took place, there were continual bickerings. The *kusiut* constantly endeavoured to impress their rivals with their own prowess; while the *a'alk*, not convinced of the others' power, used to mock them in their songs. This was the usual practice in case of some error in *kusiut* ritual. The *a'alk* frequently disobeyed the orders of the *kusiut* and a number of them once tried to pry up a huge boulder beneath which was the "power" of a certain *kusiut* (II, p. 8). In recent years the *kusiut* society has entirely [178] gained the supremacy, but it is agreed by all Bella Coola that in former years this was by no means the case, and that *a'alk* did not hesitate even to kill one of their rivals.

Miscellaneous Ceremonies

556 The rites described in this chapter and the one preceding comprise the potlatch of the Bella Coola so far as its details could be learnt. Until the increase of wealth in recent years, the potlatch was rare, and it is unlikely that in any village more than one month in the year was consumed in the

556 performance of rites of this kind. But sociological and ethical
[182] concepts, shown at their highest development in the potlatch,
are not limited to a few weeks of the year, or to any class of
the community. Generosity on a large scale can be publicly
[577] displayed by chiefs alone, but to a lesser degree this virtue
must be practised by everyone, since avarice is considered a
576 major sin. Anyone who happens to pass a house in which a
574 meal is taking place must be invited to share it; to do otherwise would be considered rude. The person summoned must
take at least a trifle to show that he is not churlish and too
proud to eat with his host, while if he is hungry, he shares
whatever is being served as a matter of course. The head of
[177] the family should be the first to taste any wine* as proof that
[273] it is not poisoned, but otherwise he fares little, if any, better
[342] than his guests. This custom is now rapidly falling into disuse
through the construction of individual family houses with doors
[414] and locks. The fisherman who has exclusive rights to a suit-
476 able place for netting olachen or salmon must give some of his
catch to anyone who asks him. If he has landed four salmon,
[226] the first solicitor is given one, later comers, none at all. When
a net is set in the river, anyone passing is allowed to raise it
and take some of the contents; if there are two fish, he may
remove one, if many, three or four. To take all would be a
[685] despicable theft, sufficient to brand the transgressor as greedy;
[626] hence public opinion prevents the system from being carried
to excess. A hunter who brings back several mountain goats
[224] or other large game is expected to invite his neighbours to a
feast, which virtually means that he must share his takings.

556 Presents of this kind increase the prestige of the donor who
has thus acted in accordance with Bella Coola ethics, and are
431 advantageous investments since others must reciprocate. The
system is carried to such lengths that, until recent years, it
was more profitable to give away goods than to sell them. In
the case of a sale, the purchaser endeavours to give as little
as possible, whereas the recipient of a gift returns as much as

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*This is a modern practice, dating from the introduction of home-brew.

he can. Several of the older people mentioned that early white traders would have received more for their goods by giving them away than by selling. 556 431

Even at the present time the Bella Coola sometimes carry out a practice which was once common. Particularly in the early autumn or in spring, a chief who has large supplies of food may decide to show his wealth to the members of a neighbouring tribe such as the Bella Bella. Alone, or with a few friends, he goes to a foreign village where he is sure to find accommodation in the home of some friend, relative, or important chief. In the evening he invites the inhabitants of his host's village to the house in which he is staying, and uses the food he has brought with him to provide them with an elaborate meal. His guests now feel it incumbent on them to repay this generosity, and one of them asks the singers to beat out one of his songs, the Bella Bella equivalent to *sisaok*, *a'alk*, or even *kusiut*. The owner dances to it and then gives presents to the stranger to validate the performance he has just witnessed. This is repeated by everyone to whom he has given food, and although each present may be small, their total is greater than the original outlay. Sometimes a poor man, feeling himself too insignificant to give a ceremony of this kind, takes a supply of food to a foreign tribe to sell. If the hosts wish to show their generous dispositions they persuade him to give it away in the fashion just described, which always brings in more than he could obtain by sale. It is even customary for the hosts to lend such a stranger enough food for public distribution if his own stock is too small. 556 438 [484]

Although the most important Bella Coola dances are performed at potlatches or during the *kusiut* season, they are not confined to these periods. Professional singers do nothing else and, except during the run of salmon when everyone is busy fishing, a dance occurs every few nights. Supernatural beings are not called down; consequently there is little solemnity and everyone has a good time. On these occasions, *kusiut* songs are first beaten out, followed by *sisaok* and *a'alk*, and the owner 533 535 574

533 of each song dances to it. Anyone who has enough food to
535 provide a meal for all is glad to invite his neighbours to such
an affair, but the singers and heralds can *force* a stingy man
574 to act as host. Everyone knows his neighbour's resources and
the singers have *no* hesitation in going to the house of a man
with an ample supply of food and beginning to beat out songs
[203] there. The heralds are quick to see what is happening and
[626] call the people, with the result that the involuntary host is
compelled to provide a meal in order not to be thought mean
and churlish. Without waiting for the singers to take the
[203] initiative, heralds likewise often invite people to the house of
a man whom they know to be well provided with food.

During the summer, the necessity of laying in supplies of
[221] salmon makes it impossible to hold many dances, although one
[796] of the non-sacred type just described takes place whenever
there is a lull in the fishing. In the early autumn, when ber-
556 ries, fish, and game are abundant, the thoughts of chiefs turn
796 to potlatches and the lengthy preliminaries are begun. At this
season, too, a chief who lacks sufficient wealth to invite foreign
[221] guests, calls in his neighbours for a *sisauk* dance and initiates
some of his young relatives into that society. The ritual,
[575] described in the last chapter, resembles that of a potlatch
[535] except that no new house is constructed, there is no return of
a dead relative, and the ceremonial connected with the coming
of foreigners is necessarily omitted. In some cases a chief
performs this type of rite a year before he proposes to hold a
potlatch, and explains that he is doing so because he will be
unable to give presents to the inhabitants of his own village
[426] at the later affair. Gifts so distributed are returnable with
interest, though it is not obligatory for recipients to do this in
time for the donor to make use of their repayment at his
potlatch.

Ceremonials of this nature occupy the Bella Coola during
[575] the early autumn, while in winter *kusiut* dances take place
almost nightly. When they are over, it is time for the non-
[535] sacred variety of *a'alk* performances, and for another type of
rite, nusāxKāmx̭.

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rite, *nusäxkämx*. This can be described here, since, although 852
not closely associated with the potlatch, it serves to teach 867
children the principles of present-giving and indebtedness.
February is the proper month for *nusäxkämx*, although pre- [796]
liminary arrangements are made early in the winter. A chief
who has a son or daughter about ten or twelve years of age [556]
may decide to use some of his food, and a small part of his
wealth, for the benefit of the child. With the assistance of his
relatives, the father begins making large numbers of toy canoes,
miniature bows and arrows, small baskets, and models of all
other types of articles commonly given away at potlatches.
The manufacture of these requires several months, but to-
wards the end of January they are nearly ready.

A name must then be chosen for the child. Since a *nusäx-* 553
kämx dance is a humorous, non-sacred affair, a *nusäxkämx* 852
name is not embodied in a myth, but is drawn from some story.
Occasionally, parents decide on a new one, but more often the 867
designation selected is one used for the same purpose by a [535]
grandparent of the child. There is no rivalry with regard to
names of this type, and one of them can be re-used without
asking consent of the last incumbent, although permission
would never be refused. There must be a song with each name
and the grandparents and other elderly relatives teach this to 533
a number of boys who are to act as singers. The words may 852
have been remembered from a previous occasion; if not, a 867
simple theme is composed by one of the old people having
some reference to the name about to be conferred. For ex-
ample, one appellation of this type is *Ṫoplwac*, Fawn, and the [551]
accompanying words are:

"We hear that Deer has borne a child."

Another name is *Qolos*, Beaver, and the song: "Be of good cheer, the Beaver is coming."

A third song is, "Go outside under the house like a dog."

Occasionally a small incident in an ancestral myth is used. The teaching of the song to the juvenile singers is a source of constant merriment; the parents and grandparents are the

852 principal instructors, aided by the professional musicians.
867 Boys are always willing to act as singers for the practice they
[533] receive, and the gifts they will acquire. Other lads are chosen to act as heralds, an effort being made in each case to pick those likely to pursue these professions.

[796] The day finally selected for the ceremony is in February, on a date when nothing of importance is taking place. The juvenile heralds summon the child guests, who have been invited in accordance with the rules governing a potlatch, especial care being taken to omit none to whom the child donor is indebted. His father carefully instructs him in this matter, thus impressing on his son's mind one of the fundamental points of Bella Coola life. In the late afternoon, when all have
[535] assembled, the boy singers beat out the donor's song and he dances to it. It may be in the nature of a *sısaok*, *a'alk*, or *kusiut* dance, according to the wishes of his parents. In many cases, one of the grandparents or some other old relative likewise dances to the song, using whatever style he chooses. There is no ceremonial significance to the ceremony and all enjoy themselves immensely, especially the adult guests. After
[553] the dancing, the new name is announced and presents are given to the guests. The father of the young donor carefully instructs him as to the scale of his gifts, emphasizing the necessity of rewarding the singers and heralds, and of repaying with interest those children from whom he has received favours. In this way, the ceremony serves as a practical example of how to conduct a potlatch. The parents of the donor always provide some tasty food for the occasion, and this is distributed after
[556] the gifts have been handed round. The necessity for food and presents makes it impossible for any but the children of chiefs to enjoy this training.

After the ceremony, the children parade up and down the sidewalk in front of the houses, singing boisterously. The performance has been for their benefit and they wish to "show off." One night completes the affair, but the following afternoon another child may summon his comrades to a similar

ceremony. The child singers first beat out the song of the 852
present donor, then that of his predecessor, to which the latter 867
dances once again. If food is plentiful, *nusäxkämx̣* ceremonies
may be carried out every day for several weeks, or a year or [796]
two may elapse without one. A child's song is remembered
from year to year and he dances whenever it is beaten out. [533]
The name acquired in this way is used semi-jocularly by a lad's [535]
comrades. After marriage, it is considered unfitting for a [551]
youth to be concerned with *nusäxkämx̣* and he normally be-
comes an *a'alk*. [885]

Ceremonies of this kind have been discontinued for many
years and it was impossible to obtain detailed accounts. The [182]
main features are clear: they served to instruct children in the methods of present-giving. According to one informant, there were two types of *nusäxkämx̣* ceremonial; one of the humorous pattern above described in which, however, food alone was given away, and another in which miniature presents were
distributed. This man believed that the latter was only pos-
sible for the children of wealthy chiefs, and that on such occa- [556]
sions the themes consisted of small incidents in the family myth. In either case, the importance of ceremonial can be judged from the manner in which it was impressed upon mere children.

CHAPTER VI

ORIGIN MYTHS

Introductory—Bella Coola Origin Myths—Origin Myths of Other Tribes—Early Traditions Having the Ceremonial Significance of Origin Myths—Susaok Origin Myths

INTRODUCTORY

773 128 EXAMPLES will be given here of the origin myths, which are believed to authorize so much of the ritual already described, and to which repeated reference has been made. [114] In 1898 Professor Boas published such an admirable collection of traditions of this type (pp. 50 ff.) that the present writer paid little attention to the subject. The Bella Coola, however, are so intensely proud of the deeds of their first forefathers [124] that several insisted on recounting them before they were willing to do other work; in consequence, a fair number of myths was collected through necessity. Since tales of this type were recounted almost entirely at potlatches, their significance has declined since the prohibition of this rite. Consequently, many legends are only remembered in part; the abbreviated and often pointless series of anecdotes here recorded can be no more than a small part of the rich field which must once have existed among the Bella Coola.[1]

424 773 As Professor Boas has clearly shown, origin myths relate how, in the beginning of time, the supreme god sent down to earth the first ancestors of the Bella Coola people, each usually

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[1] In writing up this field material, it was my original intention to place all legends together in a separate section, or appendix, following a common anthropological practice. This, however, would have been contrary to Bella Coola thought since origin myths, for example, are regarded as entirely different from either mere stories, or from incidents connected with shamans,—to name two other groups of what are usually described as "legends." I recognize that the insertion of this chapter of origin myths interrupts the sequence of presenting Bella Coola culture, but I believe that it is the way which the Bella Coola themselves would regard as logical, and that it brings out the essential interactions of this type of myth upon their whole life.

provided with means of sustenance, a house, and certain supernatural 424
powers. The right to the names of these people, as 773
well as to the type of ceremonial objects used by them, has
been the privilege of their descendants. But these early Bella
Coola, like their modern descendants, had several designations,
each carrying with it a definite prerogative. In a single myth
there may be embodied a dozen or more names and incidents
which are quoted at the present day to authorize such different
phases of culture as dances, rights to hunting-grounds, professions,
names of dogs, or *kusiut* prerogatives.[1] Any myth which
gives the initial use of a name, a dance, or any other prerogative,
is termed a *smaiusta*. Each of these is, or was in the old
days, remembered with great care and never recounted in full
detail except to the members of the ancestral family whose
names are embodied in it. Even at potlatches the full details
of the myth are not laid bare. Indeed, if a young man is of a [577]
flighty, garrulous disposition, unlikely to preserve the dignity
of his ancestral fame, the details are concealed from him. Even
at the present time there is much resentment at any unauthorized
use of a *smaiusta*, and in the old days this would [627]
inevitably have led to bloodshed.

Boas (p. 116) states that the terms *smaiusta* and *sɪnsma*
are synonymous. The writer feels certain that this is an error. 114
It was discussed repeatedly with various Bella Coola, all of [538]
whom agreed that a *sɪnsma* is a mere story which can be told
by anyone, whereas a *smaiusta* is a myth possessed by the
individual, or individuals, whose prerogatives are derived from
it. To the Bella Coola the two are utterly different.

None the less, there is no doubt that records of the past 176
change from one category to the other. A wealthy chief, eager
to give a potlatch, but lacking the mythical authorization, 773
must frequently have used a *sɪnsma*, claiming the hero as an
ancestor. There would be veiled amusement at him for doing [183]
so, but the prestige of one who can give potlatches is so great
that in time his claim would probably be accepted. The two

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[1] The details of these will be described later.

178 773 versions of the myth given (vol. I, pp. 313-19) is a case in point. The first was told as a *smaiusta* by a woman who claimed to be a descendant of the people figuring in it; the second, as a story, *sımsma*, by a man. In view of the reliability of both informants, it seems highly probable that this is a story, partly converted to a myth. In other examples there are incidents resembling the supernatural tales given in vol. I, chap. IX, and here too it appears probable that *sımsma* have been assimilated into *smaiusta*. [577 424] It is complimentary to the truthfulness of the Bella Coola, and to the respect they show for intangible property, that none of the myths recorded were *smaiusta* owned by others. Repeatedly an informant would say that he knew one, but would not tell it since it belonged to some other family.

128 773 After collecting a few myths, in each of which it was stated that the first settlers at village X were A, B, and C, with their sisters, P and Q, it seemed as if it would have been possible, before the culture of the Bella Coola had fallen into its present decay, to make a census of those whom they believe to have been first settlers of this earth, and that such a list would have had few contradictions. This was soon found to be false. Two myths may give different people as the first occupants of a certain village, nor does such contradiction trouble the Bella Coola. Each man, convinced of the authenticity of his own family account, is quite willing to believe that the one belonging to someone else is equally correct. [811] This characteristic lack of logical consistency has already been mentioned in other connections. Boas (p. 61) likewise gives an instance of uncertainty as to the first occupants of a village, though, on the whole, he found Bella Coola mythology to be more codified than the present writer has done. In view of their lack of systematization in other matters, it would have been surprising if they had evolved a census of their first ancestors, accepted by all as accurate.

[178] Another matter to be considered at this point is the similarity of detail in many myths. In part this can be explained

by the assumption that *sımsma* have been elevated into 128
smaiusta; in this case it would not be impossible for the same 178
story to have been used by two or more families. A more
common explanation is the splitting of myths. Although, 773
theoretically, one can never be altered, and portions in the possession of other individuals are remembered as such, there must have been many cases in which the owner of a section told the whole as his own property. This would not be difficult in cases where he moved away from the other members of his family. In course of time, with the assimilation of elements in themselves not strictly mythological, two myths would evolve having a few incidents in common. If asked concerning this, the Bella Coola explain that the first people were quite as capable of doing the same things as two modern men. The occurrence of the same name, or names, in different myths does not, according to them, prove a connection, since many of the first people had the same names.

Finally, there have been included a number of myths dealing with the coming to earth of people in other localities. Probably these are, in origin, those of other tribes, more or less assimilated to the Bella Coola pattern. Each was said to have been obtained by the marriage of one of the descendants of the people described therein with a Bella Coola.

No further explanation is needed for the following myths which are arranged, as far as possible, according to the list already given of Bella Coola towns.

BELLA COOLA ORIGIN MYTHS 539*

ORIGIN MYTH OF *Ālqālāxl*[1]

In the beginning of time, *Ālquntām*, in his form of *Sunx*, the Sun, sent down a man, *Yuyulkʷmai*, to Mount *Nus·mātllaix* (also called *Ālquntāmaākus*, *Sqatsulx*, and *Alkikemlākun*), a mountain on the north side of the Bella Coola River about two miles from the sea, near the upper end of the Indian reserve. With him came *Xwonxwonum*, the Hummingbird,

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[1] Related by Mrs. Webber.

*539 and *Qwax*, the Raven. The former flew ahead to clear a path down the mountain slope for *Yuyulkʷmai*. At that time there was no sun, everything was dark and bleak. As they descended the mountain, they remembered that they had forgotten to bring from above the sticks for making fire which *Sınx* had promised them. So Raven assumed the form of a deer, returned to the upper regions, collected the desired appliances, and rejoined his companions below. *Sınx* had given *Yuyulkʷmai* a stone hammer to use in making a salmon-weir, so he chose a site near the river, where the village of *Älqäläxl* now stands, and built a house of evergreen boughs. The perpetual gloom annoyed Raven so that he determined to release light, *sx̣em*, which he knew was in a container in the house above. Once again he ascended and succeeded in uncovering the light of the sun which has since shone forth on this world. From this Raven took for himself the name, *Qunqwınım uldidā sx̣em*.

When *Yuyulkʷmai* awoke after the first night in his new house, he found a salmon-weir ready for him, built by *Sınx* while he was sleeping. That night he slept again, but nothing had altered in the morning.

*539 During the day, *Sınx* appeared to *Yuyulkʷmai*, saying:

551 "I bring you the name, *Sınxälotla*. When you give a potlatch, carve my face on your totem-pole."

The next day *Sınx* came again.

"I bring you the name, *Sınxäkila*," he said. "When you give a potlatch, carve my face on the bench where the chiefs sit."

The third day *Sınx* appeared once more, saying:

"I bring you the name, *Änuxemlaix*. When you give a potlatch, paint my face on the back wall of your house."

Next day *Sınx* appeared in the form of a stump with numerous radiating roots, scoured and polished by the river.

"You will have the name *Alqexqi'djut*,"[4] he said. "If you find a hammer used in the construction of salmon-weirs, you will know that other people are living above you on the river. Put abalone-shell on the hammer."

*539 With these instructions *Sınx* went away and never came back.

In course of time, when the population of the earth increased, *Yuyulkʷmai* became rich and invited the people to a potlatch. The name he used on this occasion was *Sınxälotla* and he carved the face of *Sınx* on his totem-pole, as he had been instructed to do. A few years later he gave another potlatch, with the name *Sınxäkila*, and this time he carved *Sınx*'s face on the bench where the chiefs sat. When he gave

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[4] Meaning, "A glance downwards." It is the word used when a person looks downwards between his legs, or over his shoulders, a reference to the manner in which *Sınx*, from aloft, watches the actions of mortals.

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his third rite he validated the name *Ănuxemlaix*, and he had *Sınx*'s face painted on the back wall of his house. *Yuyulkʷmai*'s fourth and last potlatch was given in the name of *Alqexqi'djut*. This time he erected as a totem-pole a bare stick, presumably in reference to the appearance of *Sınx* as a tree-trunk.[5]

When *Yuyulkʷmai* came to Mount *Nus·mätllaix* he was accompanied by his old father, *Ťciknutl*, his younger brother *Diqom'notl*, and a still younger sister, *Kimilkän*. These three went away at once to the Skeena River, taking with them some of the large cone-shaped whistles which they had brought with them as a present from the supreme god. The people living on the Skeena desired these articles so greatly that they quarrelled and fought for them, disgusting *Ťciknutl* and *Kimilkän* so much that they determined to return.[6] But *Ťciknutl* was too old to travel. His daughter had a copper upon which she thrust her aged father, and then placed it firmly against the under side of a rock which was suspended without visible support a few feet above the ground. *Ťciknutl* was wedged between boulder and copper, and there he died. *Kimilkän* retraced her steps back to Bella Coola, to the summit of Mount *Nus·mätllaix*, whence she took flight back to the land above.

Meanwhile *Diqom'notl* was prospering. He lived in a copper shelter on the shore of a river with a copper raven, *Snuqwaxwäls*, perched on the roof of his house where it could peer over the edge into the river beneath to see the salmon, *Snusımkäls*, and the salmon, *Snusımlkänk'*. *Diqom'notl* was able to give potlatches at which he made for himself the name *Ao·sti*, and the *sısaok* name, *Łäliämx*. One of the songs which he used was composed as if it were sung by the copper itself: the themes of others were *Snuqwaxwäls*, *Snusımkäls*, and *Snusımlkänk'*. [551]

At last *Diqom'notl* became weary of the Skeena and determined to visit *Yuyulkʷmai*. Travelling in a copper canoe he soon reached the mouth of the *Pe·əslə* where he found no one. From this experience he created for himself the name, *U·sḳäxus*, which means, "There is Nothing." *Diqom'notl* proceeded on foot to *Sınxl*, where he met *Yuyulkʷmai* to whom he told his adventures. [551]

SECOND ORIGIN MYTH OF *Ălqäläxl*[7]

In the beginning there came down to the western slope of Mount *Nus·mätllaix* three brothers, whose names, in relative order of their ages, [551]

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[5] The names which occur in this myth are still in use.

[6] Another version states that they married and settled on the Skeena where their descendants still live; it is said that their origin myths record their Bella Coola ancestry.

[7] Related by Mrs. Webber.

539 were *Stâlıımχ*, *uyuyuyut*, and *Nusχemda*. Descending the mountain they settled at *Âlqalâxl*. There was a spring inside their house, near the back-wall, and from spring water, *xwanutl*, the brothers took for themselves the name *Snuxwnulâls*.

After they had been living on this earth for some time *Stâlıımχ* married a certain *Skqwâlutl*; they soon had a daughter to whom they gave the name, *Nusχemtaiān·a*. Much to the parents' joy, she grew into girlhood very rapidly and was soon of marriageable age. Now at this time there was no sun; it was hidden in a container hanging from the roof of *Stâlıımχ*'s house. Raven determined to obtain this for the use of mortals, and decided to become *Nusχemtaiān·a*'s child with this aim in view. First he changed himself into a tiny fragment of hemlock needle, and placed himself in the cup from which she was drinking. But the girl blew away the fragment of leaf, though she had no idea that it was Raven. Again he tried by changing himself to a piece of eagle down, but again she skimmed it from the surface of the water. The third time Raven became mud. *Nusχemtaiān·a* drank this carelessly with the water, and was both startled and perturbed to find herself pregnant. Raven had entered her body.

One day *Nusχemtaiān·a* saw a very old man sitting by the side of a pool. He had spots of red paint on his face and appeared to be very poor. The man's name was *Kāmālqwax*. The girl told her father whom she had seen and *Stâlıımχ* upbraided her for not inviting him to come to their house.[1]

In course of time *Nusχemtaiān·a* gave birth to an infant who was, of course, Raven. Within a few weeks he had grown to a naughty little boy, always demanding new toys, and always crying if he could not get them. One day he saw the sun hanging near the roof and at once he began to cry for the shining thing. He continued until *Stâlıımχ* yielded to his grandson's tears and gave it to him to play with. Raven played with it on the floor for a short time, then opened the door and dashed out. As he did so he shattered the container which held light. It became the sun, which has since remained shining. Raven once more assumed his bird form and flew away.

uyuyuyut, the second brother, had received from *Âlquntām* the power of completing the transformation to human form of any of the first people. Some of them who had come to earth as eagles still had the beaks of these birds, others had the tails of wolves, or other animal characteristics. *uyuyuyut* remedied these defects by rubbing the affected parts with urine.

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[1] This paragraph, which seems to be extraneous, was included without comment by the narrator.

From this he took for himself the name, *Yulyuxaslais*, "The Face Cleanser."

According to another informant the first settler at *Ālqālaxl* was *Xemxemtnim* who brought with him a moosehide and a model of *Nusmât·a*. He set up this house and it expanded or contracted according to his wish.

ORIGIN MYTH OF *Slskitl*[9]

Among the first people to be sent down to this earth was *Q̣eil*. For some time he lived on the north side of the Bella Coola River near its mouth; then with his sister, *Ānusyelaix*, and a herald he moved across to *Slskitl*, at the base of the mountain on the south shore of the river. He had a daughter who married a son of *Xemxemtnim*, living on the north side of the river. To their child he gave the name *Noamtsaxaik*.

About this time *Ālkwi*, a *Snutle·tl* chief, lost *Alqtcâlos*, a stake decorated with abalone-shells which he used for his salmon-trap. It floated down into *Q̣eil*'s country where *Ānusyelaix* saw it, and advised her brother to take possession of it. *Q̣eil* did so gladly because of its beautiful decoration, without knowing what it was or whence it came. He took it home and displayed it to many of his neighbours, but no one could tell him what it was. In honour of this event *Q̣eil* gave his son the name *Alqtcâlos*, [551] which has since been handed down in his family. *Ālkwi* followed downstream after his stake, but failed to overtake it before *Q̣eil* had obtained it; so it was never returned to its rightful owner.

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FRAGMENT OF A *Q̣omqo·ts* ORIGIN MYTH[10]

In the beginning *Ālqunitâm* sent down from *Nusmât·a* to Mount *Nus·lâxum*, on the south side of the Bella Coola River, about one and a half miles from the sea, four brothers: the eldest, *Xemlaix* or *Laqwomaix*; the second whose name is unknown; the third, *sxulqalam*; and the youngest, *ux·wmaisa*. They each came in the form of some animal, bringing with them a miniature salmon-weir, which they set up in the river near where they had settled. *ux·wmaisa* had brought with him the prerogative of punishing violators of taboos connected with the river. The four brothers lived for some time at the base of the mountain until jealousy arose among them and the eldest moved to *Q̣omqo·ts*. There he caught innumerable salmon in the river so he was soon able to give them to people all over the world. It seemed as if the earth were tilted so that all its [551]

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[9] Fragmentary version related by Judas.
[10] Related by Albert King.

539 [551] wealth flowed in upon him; accordingly he took for himself the name *Siālxelāx* which has this significance. Since he was the eldest and chief of the four brothers the name has always been considered the most exalted in *Q̣omqo·ts*.

ORIGIN MYTH OF *Snuləli*[11]

In the beginning of time *Ālquntām* created the forefathers of all mankind in his house above and then asked each in what form he wished to go to earth. A number of bird and animal cloaks were hanging on the walls of the house, and each was invited to take his choice. One whose name was *Kāliākus* chose the raven. When he had donned the garment he became a raven. Slowly he circled down from above in long spirals, carrying with him his two younger brothers and a sister, all in raven form, as a bird carries its young. He set down the two small brothers on the top of a flat mountain near *Snuləli* where he told them to remain, adding:

"I am going to the east but will return."

He brought back some abalone-shells, which he set down near the diminutive ravens, saying:

"Stay here, I am going to the west but will return."

This time he brought back with him some copper, that flashed in the sun.

Kāliākus and his two brothers now assumed human form and sent their raven cloaks floating back to the land above. This was what happened to all the bird and animal forms used by the first people. The three descended the mountain and built their house by the Bella Coola River at the spot now known as *Snuləli*. *Kāliākus* had brought with him a mountain goat, which, when set at liberty, bred with great rapidity, so that these first *Snuləli* people subsisted largely on goat flesh, the provision made for them by *Ālquntām*. In some inexplicable manner it appears that the supernatural hunter *Twalāllit*, whose other name is *Lalemkila*, "The One Who Throws Down [Goats]," had come with this group. *Kāliākus* had such success in hunting that he was able to give a potlatch and bestow valuable presents of goat meat, goat grease, and woollen blankets. At this ceremony he took for himself the *susaok* name, *Łāllāliāmdimut*, "The Copper One," because when returning from the west the raven had covered himself with copper, so that it seemed as if he were made of it.[12]

During his lifetime, though whether before or after his potlatch, it is impossible to state, *Kāliākus* determined to obtain light for mankind,

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[11] Related by Joshua Moody.

[12] This name has since been used by the descendants of *Kāliākus*.

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as at that time it was all semi-darkness, faintly illuminated by what resembled pale moonlight. He remembered that he had seen the sun in *Ālquntām*'s house, enclosed in a kind of a sack, and he determined to steal it. So he again assumed the form of a raven and flew back aloft. Without allowing himself to be seen, he changed himself into a grain of dust and placed himself in a cup from which *Ālquntām*'s daughter, *Siyman-a*, was about to drink. Noticing the speck of dirt, she blew it away. Then he changed to a hemlock needle, floating on the surface of the liquid, but she lifted it off. Undiscouraged, Raven became mud which she drank down, enabling him to enter her body. *Siyman-a* was greatly surprised to find herself pregnant, and so was her father. In course of time a boy was born, really Raven, though she knew it not. He grew with phenomenal rapidity, and within a few weeks was crawling around on the floor and, like a spoilt child, crying for playthings. Whatever his mother or grandmother gave him, he threw aside after a few minutes and cried the more; he was a fractious child. Looking up, Raven pretended to notice for the first time the sun, dimly gleaming from within its container as it hung from the roof of his grandfather's house. He cried and cried, almost choking himself; nothing would satisfy him, so at last his indulgent grandfather gave him the shining object though he was careful to pad the floor with soft bark. The happy child rolled the dimly glowing ball around on the soft covering for some time, but when the door was opened, he crawled outside with it, burst the container against the doorpost, assumed raven form once more, and flew away, croaking derisively. Thus human beings received the boon of sunlight. Raven flew back to earth and again became *Kāliākus*.

SECOND ORIGIN MYTH OF *Snulɔli*[33]

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Long, long ago, there were no people on this earth; they were all in *Nusmāt-a* where different languages were made. Then *Ālquntām* gave life to the occupants of his house and sent them down to earth. A post, *nultɪnikta*, stretched from the land above to this world, and down this swarmed five brothers, *Xemcua*, *Yuyalkʷmai*, *Pɪngkɪla*, *Waākus*, and *Noākila*. *Pɪngkɪla*, who was in part an eagle, brought with him an olachen and a hammer for driving stakes used for olachen nets, and *Xemcua* and *Yuyalkʷmai* brought a painted seat which they used at ceremonial gatherings. About the same time four sisters came to earth at *Naos*, far to the east. Their names were *Wiakai*, who was without legs; *Tsumllaks*; *Skamolɪsmtn-a*; and *Nuskwalsɪkānda*. *Pɪngkɪla* exerted his power of thought to make them come to Bella Coola. The four women set out for the west and at *Smaiun·a*, the source of the Bella Coola River, *Wiakai* scraped the ground with what served her as a foot, and a stream began to flow. *Skumalsqmān·a* put her hands over her head and began to rock to and fro in woe at seeing the water, hence her name; *Tsamliaks* sucked up much of it, but a gentle rivulet continued to flow which they followed to the west. It increased in size and ultimately led them to *Nusqalst*, where they heard Echo (I, p. 306). *Wiakai* led her sisters to the south to get some of the highly prized paint which was bubbling from the ground like a spring.

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[33] Related by Captain Schooner.

Meanwhile *Xemcus* had come from his mountain at *Tcumatl*, and though *Yayalk·mai* had gone to *Sensl* they continued their joint ownership of the painted seat. *Pongkula* went westward looking for a suitable place to settle, carrying with him his olachen and his hammer. At Mesatche Nose, the point between North Bentinck Arm and Labouchere Channel, a house arose from the water beneath him. It was that of *Q̣omoqua*, chief of the sea creatures, within which the walls were painted by the rising and falling of the tides. This house appeared, moved slightly, and subsided, whereby *Pongkula* became a shaman. He continued his journey, stopping at *Q̣waps*, *Tāl·ia*, and *Nusā·* rivers, at the last of which he met a chief *A'yaaq*, and his herald, *Kāmsia*. There he threw his olachen into the water, where it multiplied past all count in order to serve as his food. *Pongkula* ascended a small river flowing from the east and after various travels reached *Snulōli* where the rest of his party had remained. Here he constructed a fish-dam in which many salmon were caught. He built a house fashioned on the plan of the one which had risen from the water, and invited guests from far and near to potlatches. It fell several times, but he always rebuilt it. Four of the brothers married the four sisters.

The above myth was collected with difficulty and probably contains many inaccuracies. No explanation could be obtained of the relationship, if any, of this group to *Kāliāku* and his people. Another informant stated that *Pongkula* settled at *Tcumatl*, where he used his hammer to construct a salmon-weir.

THIRD ORIGIN MYTH OF *Snulōli*[10]

Before this earth was populated *Ālquntām* created birds and animals in his house up above, giving to each its form and its voice. Only Raven was dissatisfied, and constantly rubbed off his coat of paint, hoping that he might be adorned even more beautifully. At that time Raven had variegated plumage. When everything was ready, *Älquntäm* sent a house, built like his own, *and all that it contained down to Snułatl under* the guidance of a man, to whom he had given his own name and his own power. This human *Älquntäm* tried to paint Raven, without being able to please the petulant fellow, until, becoming disgusted, he coated him a uniform black which Raven could not remove. Now all was finished, and when *Älquntäm* opened the door, out rushed the animals and the birds. In the press *Qaeduks*, the Duck, whose seat was on the left of the fire facing inwards, was stepped upon; that is why to this day the duck can only waddle awkwardly. Her neighbour, *Sqwaldun*, another species of duck, whose place was opposite *Qaeduks*, was not injured; consequently she can walk comfortably. [825]

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[10] Related by Steamboat Annie.

Among the animals released was Deer, who rushed down to the river, seized some sticks, thrust them up on his head where they grew into antlers which had hitherto been lacking. There was no fire in the world then, so Deer determined to obtain some from the house of *Älquntäm* above. He returned aloft and began to dance. *Älquntäm*, not recognising the disguised Deer, watched the performer with interest. Suddenly the crafty one thrust his head down into the flames, transfixing some of the burning sticks on his antlers and rushed away, with *Älquntäm* in vain pursuit. This is the way fire was brought to the world. [825]

In course of time, the man, *Älquntäm*, amassed enough goods to give a potlatch, taking for himself the name *Älquntämakılta*, as the supreme god had decreed. When the guests had assembled Deer danced, but in his wild gyrations he kicked some of the visitors, wounding them. The irate *Älquntämakılta* chased him out of the house and told him never to return. The guests then gave presents to *Älquntämakılta*, to his heralds, and to those who had been injured by Deer.

Since that time whenever the owner of the name *Älquntämakılta* gives a potlatch he erects a house similar to that brought down by his first ancestor with a totem-pole showing a design of Raven. Included in the ritual is a presentation of presents similar to that carried out by the guests to the first *Älquntämakılta*; it is not clear whether this was originally done as a mark of goodwill or whether it was to shame the host on account of maltreatment of the guests. Belonging to this origin myth is the *nusqmal* name, *Taliakle·a*.

The inclusion of such explanatory details as this is a common feature of origin myths and illustrates the way in which traditions blend into narratives; in the old days they would not have been related at potlatches, but it seems wise to include them where necessary at the end of individual myths.

ORIGIN MYTH OF *Nusqalst*[illegible]

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In the beginning of time there came down from *Nusmät·a* to *Nusqalst* a man whose name was *Kāmālsonqʷ'*. As a present from *Älquntäm* he had brought with him a model of *Nusmät·a*, which he set up on this earth and to which he gave the same name. This was after the first *sonqʷ'* sky, had fallen; it was from this catastrophe that *Kāmālsonqʷ'* derived his name.

Kāmālsonqʷ' had seen at the zenith of *Nusmät·a* the face of a grizzly bear, in consequence of which he used that animal for all his decorations. His blankets, food boxes, spoons, all were adorned with grizzly bear designs; the door of his house, *Nusmät·a*, was the mouth of one which opened to admit a guest, and closed when he had entered. The dwelling, which lengthened of its own accord whenever *Kāmālsonqʷ'* gave a potlatch, endured for generations.[illegible] Before the door there lay on his back a man, *Bo'ohsta*, with a huge stomach on which anyone entering the house had to step; a slave or commoner did so without resultant noise, but when a mighty chief trod on *Bo'ohsta* his weight drew forth a grunt from the recumbent man.[illegible] Any chief entering gave to *Kāmālsonqʷ'* a slave, a canoe, or a copper, "to open the door," otherwise the mouth of the grizzly bear would snap shut and kill him.

Kāmālsonqʷ' was powerful enough to give many potlatches; when planning one, he began his preparations early in the spring for the following winter. First he beached his canoe before his house, smeared its grizzly bear nose with urine, and beat upon it with evergreen boughs. This was a signal that he proposed to go on a raiding expedition, and his fellow villagers were always glad to follow him. His forays were always successful due to his own power and because he took care when nearing his destination to send forward a scouting party to determine the number of hostile houses and decide how many attackers should be allotted to deal with each. On one occasion he attacked the Fort Rupert people and captured a woman of chief's rank, who begged him not to enslave her, promising him her name, *Wikwan-ulwala* or *Kwala*. He agreed to her request and she tied a long halibut line around her neck and told the other women to grasp it; those who did so were spared. In the same attack *Kāmālsonqʷ'* made use of a Fort Rupert slave whom he bribed to

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[illegible] Related by Mrs. Willie Mack. In this myth are included many incidents of a period later than that of the legend itself, but regarded by the informant as being strictly dependent upon it.

[illegible] The father of a woman, about fifty years old in 1923, is said to have seen its rotten posts when a young man.

[556] [illegible] An important chief is always said to be "heavy" by virtue of the goods he has given away, and this expresses graphically the style of thought.

act as guide against his masters. The man led in the party under cover of a fog which lifted at an inopportune moment, but the slave deceived the Fort Rupert Indians into believing that his comrades were not hostile. *Kāmālsonqʷ'* rewarded the guide with a marten-skin coat and one of marmot-skins.

When he gave a potlatch, *Kāmālsonqʷ'* had the back wall of his house decorated with pictures of sun and moon, while he himself wore a grizzly bear-skin with its head above his own. As he danced, there rose through the floor a large box on which was painted a raven. *Kāmālsonqʷ'* went to the receptacle and took from it sufficient presents to supply the requirements of the visitors from one tribe, the Bella Bella, for example. Then the box would sink from sight, only to reappear with gifts for another group; this was repeated as many times as there were parties of guests from outside places. This was the method of procedure decreed by *Ālquntām*.

These first *Nusqalst* people made a number of special objects for their potlatches. As a representation of the five-peaked mountain beneath [124]
which they lived, they erected five peaks over the front of their house, a custom which has been carried out until the present day. Projecting from one of them was a figure of a mountain goat, since that animal was brought to earth to serve as food by their first ancestors. They also [415]
made a number of large stone spoons, which, after being used for many generations, were buried with a certain *Potlus* about 1875. These utensils were of a type used by *Nusqalst* before he became a mountain, and were later copied by the carpenter-masons.

Kāmālsonqʷ' was so powerful that he altered a *sisauk* rite of his potlatch into a *kusiut* dance, changed *Nusmāt-a* to a *kusiut* name, and decreed that the repository should be under the spot where his house stood. For this ceremonial he always used a whistle with the voice of a raven.

ORIGIN MYTH OF *Nusqalst*

(*Second version dealing with another settlement*)[18]

Nusqalst is a chief among mountains. Like a human leader, it has [551]
several names, *Tcākwatkus*, *Sānatlkum*, and others; these names belong to several persons now living. Like a person, too, the mountain was sent down from above at the beginning of the world to *Tsemat*, Bute Inlet, whence it moved to its present position midway up the Bella Coola valley, a location which it had heard was a pleasant one.

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[18] Related by Captain Schooner.

*539 Many people landed on this mountain from on high, among others the chief *Nusmät·a* or *Sqāmai*. He had brought with him from above a house, called *Kämdzong** which, when set up on this earth, grew so large that all the owner's family and descendants could live within. Outside the door, *Nusmät·a* had caused the erection of a totem-pole, *Nutlaqid*. Within dwelt Echo, an incessant talker, who was very clever at learning languages; his rolling voice reverberated through the house and the whole countryside. This being acted as herald and summoned people to a [539] dance by using the word *Nusmalika*; whenever a descendant of *Nusmät·a* gives a potlatch he makes a mask with an ever-changing mouth to represent Echo.

Not long after the completion of the house and totem-pole *Nusmät·a* set out one evening to fish for salmon with the aid of torches, taking with him his infant son and several followers. During their absence a snow-slide wiped out the town, killing all the inhabitants except one slave who concealed himself within the hollow totem-pole. The slide was due to the mountain being angry at the totem-pole, carved to represent him as he was before he changed to mountain form. When the survivors returned to their buried village they at once set about rebuilding it. In time, as the people increased in numbers, it again become prosperous. They built a fish-weir to supply their wants, using tools of stone obtained from Mount *Nusqalst*. *Älkwi*, the son of a *Stuie* chief, married *Nusmät·a*'s daughter, *Skumalits·a*, and *Nusmät·a* moved to *Sqomqo·ts*.

Other narrators provided a little further information about *Nusqalst*. While still in human form, he wore a flat-topped hat with broad brim around which ran two snakes. After he had been changed to stone as a mountain, several individuals looked down on him from above and chose his slopes as a landing-place, thus making him their crest. The first to do so is said to have been a man named *Qʷomai*.

FRAGMENT OF AN ORIGIN MYTH OF *Nalkuas**

In the very beginning of time, before the sky was made, *Äḷquntam* sent down to *Nalkuas* three brothers and their two sisters. The names by which the men have been remembered are *Mäsong**, *Kämdzong**, *Smusmalko*, and the women, *Smusmat·a* and *uskumat·i*. They came to earth as golden eagles, bearing the beaver as food. The youngest sister refused to change her form, and wandered around in a semi-human condition, becoming frenzied at the slightest excuse. At length her dis- [108]

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*Related by Joshua Moody.

gusted brothers and sister united to get rid of her; she became petrified in the valley which still bears her name, and which still has an evil reputation as the coldest place in the vicinity of Bella Coola. Thence come the cold winds.

Ālquntām instructed his carpenters to construct *Sunq*ᵂ. They set about their task, but failed to use any supporting posts so that when all was completed, except a small section in the east, it fell. When the carpenters recommenced their work, they took care to erect uprights to bear the weight, and then were able to construct the sky as it is today. When it was finished, the supports were removed. Only those living at *Nalliax* witnessed this disaster, and from it they took their names. *Kāmdlixsnq*ᵂ was the name of this first *Sunq*ᵂ that fell.

According to another informant the first settler at *Nalliax* was *Dadaxnq*ᵂ, who had also the name *Xomesmlais*. He came to earth in the form of a beaver, bringing a salmon-weir as means of obtaining sustenance.

FRAGMENT OF AN ORIGIN MYTH OF *Nalliax*[10]

Among the first people who came down to earth at *Tsomot* was a stone man, who brought with him a sword as a present from the supreme deity. As a result of this gift the *Tsomot* were constantly practising the art of war, and always ready to start hostilities; their settlement was a hotbed of trouble. One of these people, *Sāltmaktis* by name, wearied of constant strife, determined to set out and find a new home for himself. After considerable travelling he reached *Nalliax* where he settled down among the inhabitants of that village. He had brought with him a young boy who in time married a woman from *Sātsq*, and became the father of many children.

ORIGIN MYTH OF *Sātsq*[11]

In the beginning *Wiqusil* came to earth as a man on Mount *Naya*, near *Sātsq*. He seated himself on the mountain top and slid down to the valley, clearing a smooth track as he went, which is still bare like the path of a landslide. He was all alone and built for himself a house of evergreen boughs, *Iswah*, to which he gave the name *Kwalstal*. After sojourning there for some time he decided to marry; so he set off up the valley to find out if there were any people living above him. He travelled

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[10] Related by *Ālmuski*, a poor informant.
[11] Related by Mrs. Willie Mack.

#534 over a series of parallel ridges, from the top of one of which he saw before him a number of men, also going upstream. Around their heads they wore light-coloured bands. They disappeared over the next rises and when *Wiqpaii* reached the summit of this he saw in the hollow below, him, not a number of men, but a pack of wolves, preceding him on the trail. The wolves passed over the next ridge out of sight, but when *Wiqpaii* gained the crest he saw in front of him, not wolves, but the men again with bands around their heads. This continued for some time, *Wiqpaii* seeing men before him from one ridge and wolves from the next; he was slowly gaining on them, and finally saw the animals assume human form, take off their tails, and wrap them around their heads. He caught up with the wolf-men and told them the reason for his travels, that he sought a wife. They agreed to help him and all travelled together to the home of *Ālisomatasais*, who had landed with his wife from above on Mount *Tsaisi* in the Carrier country. They had brought from above a beaver as food, and some moose skins. *Ālisomatasais* had a daughter, *Nialtaltais*, whose other names were *Nuskmdis* and *Nuskmnäl*. *Wiqpaii* asked *Ālisomatasais* for the girl and the latter agreed. So the two were [424] married and the wolf-men sang a song which has since been handed down as a prerogative in the family of their descendants.

After the marriage the four returned towards *Stuix*, *Nialtaltais* going ahead to break a track through the forest. From this she took the name *Nuqmdnumdn-a*, "Track-Breaker"; had she not cleared this path there would have been no intercommunication today between the Carriers and the Bella Coola. In the house which *Wiqpaii* built for his bride, everything was decorated with a raven; the door was the beak of the raven; the totem-pole was a raven; and a raven was carved on the end of every beam. *Ālisomatasais* constructed a house a little above *Stuix*; it was like the present Bella Coola ones but made entirely of skins. He called it *Sksmmial*.

The two families sojourned in this vicinity for some time when *Wiqpaii* decided to travel around the world. He set off and, far in the east, crossed the upper waters of the Bella Coola River, which he decided to open as a route to the sea. He had brought with him some abalone-shells, which he used to decorate a stick; then gave it the name *Ālkdaln-i*. It floated downstream to *Nuspalst*, where the river plunged beneath a huge rock, but *Ālkdaln-i* made clear its course by shattering the barrier. Meanwhile, ayayayat, another of the first people, who had come to earth on a mountain behind *Tsamsil*, had made ready his canoe for a journey upstream. ayayayat was very proud, and considered himself the oldest of all mankind under the assumption that he was the first to reach this earth. Accordingly his grief was great when he saw *Ālkdaln-i* floating down the river and realised that other people were above him. In his disappointment he cried out, "I am but a younger brother," and abandoned his journey.

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Ālhdän i drifted on until it was caught in the fish-weir of *Oḷsmai*, the man dwelling farthest down the valley on the south shore of the Bella Coola River about a quarter of a mile from the sea. *Oḷsmai*, delighted with the pretty thing, took it to his house and called his friends to see what he had found.

SECOND ORIGIN MYTH OF *Stuix*[39]

In the beginning, when there was still no sun in this world, *Ālquntäm* erected a post which reached from its base, near *Stuix*, to the land above and prevented the sky from falling. On the top sat *Tsilmalaks*, an eagle. Down it came *Nusmätxmai*, *Wakitmai*, *Walätkitmai*, *Wiaqaii*, *Tlisla*, *Q̣ril*, and several women whose names have been forgotten. Though all were supernatural, *Q̣ril* alone was not in human form; he had come as Raven and used to croak from inside the post itself. The newcomers looked around them for a suitable spot on which to settle. *Tcawat*, on the mainland opposite the northern extremity of Vancouver Island, appealed to them, but they did not like its inhabitants, the Kwakiutl. *Nusmätxmai* and his companions were proud of the fact that they were the first to occupy the Bella Coola valley, but with this pride came the dread that others might lay claim to the distinction. There was then no river, but *Wiaqaii* scratched in the earth with his foot and the water that filled the depression became a river. In this stream he placed a log decorated with abalone-shell and instructed it to *ḷomstadimut*, "be like a person," that is, have human intelligence. When floating down the river, which was continually increasing in size, it should move from side to side so as to pass close to every populated place. The inhabitants of the villages, seeing the log, would know that they had not been first in the land. The stick did so, causing deep chagrin in all the villages past which it floated to the sea.

After due consideration, *Nusmätxmai* and his comrades travelled some distance down the river valley; then returned to *Nuskïsta*, not far from *Stuix*, where they built their house. It was of the normal size, but when many guests assembled, it enlarged to accommodate all within. The posts, the benches, the boxes, the beams, and the totem-pole were all carved with the design of Raven, known to them not as *Q̣wax*, but as *Sniqmaxmälx*. In one corner sat Echo. With the completion of this house *Nusmätxmai* and his companions became mortal.

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[39] Related by Steamboat Annie.

539 In course of time, as they grew wealthy, they were able to summon people from far and near for potlatches. This in turn enabled them to validate several names which they had brought from above. *Älquntäm* had given *Nusmālᵤxwai* a box containing whistles for *kusiut* rites. He used these and bestowed on one of his sisters the name *Nunuxmeax̣*, a *kusiut* designation still in existence. When the roof of the house was opened light shone through, from which circumstance the name *Sx̣sutl* was acquired at one of their annual potlatches. Not only was *Nusmālᵤxwai* able to validate designations which *Älquntäm* had given him, but he created several new ones as well. He gave to his sisters the names *Kälgᵤmäänᵤm* and *Q̣oṗᵤmṗmān·a*; the latter means "Rising Dust," with reference to the dust rising from the floor of the house as *Nusmālᵤxwai* threw down the moosehides which he was about to give away to his guests.

[551] All the names mentioned in this myth have been preserved. That of *Nusmālᵤxwai* is held in especial esteem by the people of *Stuᵤx*. It means "Head of the River," referring to the point where he came to this
[552] earth. Even *T̄lᵤmstadimut* is still in use, applied to a dog as the owner has no children.

THIRD ORIGIN MYTH OF *Stuᵤx*[33]

In the beginning *Älquntäm* sent down to *Smaiᵤn·a*, at the head of the Clearwater, a branch of the Bella Coola River, four brothers, *Älkwi*, *Dudusonx̣ʷ'*, *Nānätskwi*, and one whose name has been forgotten, with their sisters, *Känilkᵤs* and *O'mielkᵤs*. *Dudusonx̣ʷ'* had brought with him from above as a present from *Älquntäm* some olachen in concentrated form and one of the large cone-shaped whistles used in *susaok* ceremonials. The two women cried because they had no house. But presently they thought they were in one with a wonderfully painted roof; in reality it was the sky and the decorations were brightly shining stars. By means of their supernatural power, for they were not yet mortals, they reduced the firmament to such small compass that it was really a house to them, with the star-illuminated sky as roof. Taking this abode with them, the six set out next day for *Tcawat*, a point on the mainland opposite the north end of Vancouver Island. They travelled down the valley of a river which rises not far from the *Smaiᵤn·a* source of the Bella Coola. *Älkwi* and his relatives did not like the language of the people living at *Tcawat*, so they returned to *Smaiᵤn·a*, taking with them some of the fine cedars that flourish on that part of the coast. Thanks to their supernatural power they were able to carry these easily. 539*

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[33] Related by Steamboat Annie.

Returned to *Smaiɛn·a* they built a dug-out canoe of birch(?), the outside of which, and also the paddles, they decorated with abalone-shells. The effect was very beautiful, and they named the canoe, *K̓i'laiɛlotl*. In this craft the six set out down the Bella Coola River. When still above *Stuix* they stopped to investigate a beating sound and found that it came from the house of *Oq̣smai*. The latter invited them to come in, using *Dudusonx̣ʷ'*'s name, which he knew in some mysterious manner. When they entered they found that the beating sound was caused by their host's daughter, *Känusläliäm*, who was sitting in the back-room, thumping a copper which she was holding as if it had been an infant. *Oq̣smai* was much impressed with his guests' canoe, and they with his. A trade was mutually agreeable, as a result of which the travellers obtained a copper canoe named *Łäliaɛlotl*, fitted with copper paddles. *Dudusonx̣ʷ'* married *Känusläliäm*, who embarked with him and his brothers and sisters. They had not gone far when they were hailed by the chief of a village, who also knew *Dudusonx̣ʷ'*'s name.

"*Dudusonx̣ʷ'*," he called out, "your canoe is not much good; it has to be paddled or poled. Let us trade. You take my canoe, *Kwakwaosɛlotl*,[24] it travels with its own power."

Dudusonx̣ʷ' was unwilling to part with *Łäliaɛlotl*, but at last agreed. The seven now travelled rapidly in their merganser canoe to the coast, not stopping at the villages which they saw on the way. At the mouth of the Bella Coola River, *Dudusonx̣ʷ'* cast into the water one of the fish which *Älquntäm* had given him; it became the progenitor of all the Bella Coola olachen. The travellers went thence to the head of South Bentinck Arm where *Dudusonx̣ʷ'* threw out another olachen, the forefather of all that now frequent this place. He repeated this at Rivers Inlet, at Smith Inlet, and at every fiord on the coast, wherefore olachen are plentiful in British Columbia at the present day. [825] At *Łälsaml*, a town of which the location is uncertain, *Dudusonx̣ʷ'* was received as a benefactor and given the name *T̓läkwakila*. After visiting all the rivers on the coast *Älkwi* and his party returned to Bella Coola, where they finally settled at *Stuix*.

Throughout their travels they had carried the cedar trees with them, and they now planted them at *Stuix*. [824] That is why fine cedars have flourished there since that date. The four brothers built a comfortable house and also constructed a salmon-weir in the river, which made them so prosperous that people came from far and near to pledge their daughters to the fishermen. They were able to give numerous potlatches and so display a totem-pole, the design of which *Älquntäm* had shown to *Älkwi* [532]

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[24] *Kwakwaos* is a merganser.

*539 532 before he came to this world. It was a large pole and stood across the sidewalk from the house, not being pierced by the doorway. At the base was a grizzly bear, with paws wrapped around it as if desirous of climbing after the food which could be seen higher up. Immediately above the bear was an eagle's nest with four fledglings standing amid their broken eggshells and craning their necks eagerly upwards to greet the mother eagle flying back with a salmon. At the top of the pole was a ball, *Nusχemda*, representing the container in which the sun was enclosed; it was this that Raven broke to release light to mortals. The name of the pole was *Āl·ʟikotl.*[35]

[551] The names contained in this myth are still in use. *Kānilkes* was the relator of it; her *sısaok* song deals with *Smaiʟn·a* and, since the salmon enter Bella Coola River in hopes of reaching this place, salmon are used in the decorations of her house. The name *Dudusonχʷ'* varies; it becomes *Māsonχʷ'* when applied to a youth, and *Māsonχʷ'an·a* for a girl.

FOURTH ORIGIN MYTH OF *Stuıx*[36]

*539 Long, long ago there was in a mysterious place far to the east and far above this world, a very large house, *Nulsātlmais*, in which dwelt together all people, Bella Coola, Bella Bella, Carriers, and the rest. In it there lived too, all kinds of birds, including the thrush who taught each its song. [829] The chief of the house, *Sikxım* by name, lived there too and gave to each tribe its special language. One day he decided to visit the earth, and dived from his house downwards, becoming the sun. In this guise he came to earth on Mount *Nuya*, near *Stuıx*, where he became a man and built for himself a house which was a copy of *Nulsātlmais*, and to which he gave the same name. *Sikxım* became prosperous and gave many potlatches.

FRAGMENT OF A *Snulle·tl* ORIGIN MYTH[37]

In the beginning of time, *Ālqunitām*, in guise of the sun, sent down to earth a number of brothers with their one sister. Their names have been forgotten except that of the oldest man, *Taiakwala*, who had brought with him a beaver as provender. He released the animal, which multi-

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[424] [551] [35] As is commonly the case, there is no connection between this totem-pole and the adventures of *Ālkwi*. The person using this name has the right to use these designs as a part of his myth, exactly as the right to recount the adventures of his namesake belongs to him.

[36] Fragmentary version, relator unrecorded.

[37] Related by Joshua Moody.

plied to provide abundant food for all; it became the ancestor of all the beaver of the upper valley. Owing to their position higher up the Bella Coola, *T̓aiakwala* and his brothers considered that they were nearer to the sun than any of the people dwelling below, a fact of which they were exceedingly proud. Moreover, having been sent down by him, the sun was their crest. 537*

There were two large boulders in the river near the settlement, which *Ätquntäm* had shown *T̓aiakwala* how to use as supports for a salmon-weir. With the help of his brothers, a hole was drilled in one of the rocks; then they felled a large tree upstream and allowed it to drift down until the butt lodged in the perforated boulder and the head swung across against the other. With this as base, other trunks were woven in upright so that the river was almost spanned and a fine dam constructed. In this they caught so many salmon that *T̓aiakwala* and his brothers were able to call people from far and near to potlatches and feast them liberally on the fish. In course of time their sister was married to a chief from another town. Henceforth, whenever one of her brothers gave a potlatch, he was able to rebuy his sister on a lavish scale with the teeming salmon. The sun had taught the woman a song for such occasions, which has since been used as a prerogative by her descendants when rebuying themselves from their husbands. [424] [583]

T̓aiakwala made a long voyage of exploration during which he reached the Skeena River. He made friends with the inhabitants of the town, *Q̣ixwan*, who gave him the name, *Xwelbon*,[18] meaning *whale* in their language. Continuing his journey, he ultimately circled the earth before returning home. He obtained several other designations, including *Ailsamka* from the Kwatna people.[19]

Years after the settlement of *Snulle·tl*, the drilled stone supporting the salmon-weir broke and the ruins were swept away downstream. The people cut their hair and blackened their faces in mourning, then moved to *Stuix* where a number of their daughters had married chiefs.

ORIGIN MYTH OF *Nusxeq*[20]

It is common to add details from a story to a family myth in order to increase its length and importance. Almost cer- [178] [114]

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[18] It appears that *Xwelbon* is an attempt to pronounce the English, *whale-bone*, an interesting example of the way in which modern words have been incorporated into ancient myths and been clothed with the glamour of antiquity. [178]

[19] Both are still used by members of the ancestral family descended from *T̓aiakwala*. [551]

[20] Related by Mrs. Webber, who had learnt it from her late father, *Sinxâlotla*, a chief of *Suxl*, whose kusiut name was *Snutl'imx*.

x 539 [178] [114] tainly this has been done with the following, in spite of the fact that Boas (p. 53) records it in greater detail than the writer was able to obtain. A second version was obtained from a reliable informant who recounted it as a mere tale without hesitation. He may have been ignorant that it was the myth of another family, or may have disregarded that point, though this is unlikely. The content itself strongly supports the view that details of the usual "story" type have been added.

In the beginning of time there came down to the river which enters North Bentinck Arm at Green Bay a man, *Nusxeq*, and his wife, *Sɪmsiutadkɪs*. They went down the river to Green Bay, since called *Nusxeq* from the man, where they built their house and settled. In time a son was born, to whom they gave the name *Slɪklɪ*. The child grew with phenomenal rapidity until before long he had acquired the strength and intelligence of a man. One day *Slɪklɪ* went for a walk up the river, carrying his bow and arrows. He met what he thought was a man, though it was really a black bear in human form. The supernatural one invited *Slɪklɪ* to go home with him, which the youth did. As soon as he entered the abode he realized that he was in a bear's house, but he did not disclose to his host that he had this knowledge. The bear brought to his guest some skunk cabbage, saying that it was dry salmon; to bears skunk cabbage is dry salmon. The food was broken in small fragments and served on a very small dish so that *Slɪklɪ* was afraid that there would not be enough, though Black Bear assured him that he would not be able to eat it all. So it proved. *Slɪklɪ* ate and ate until he could eat no more, without diminishing the amount of food on the dish.

Then Black Bear said, "You must spend the night here; tomorrow you can return."

So *Slɪklɪ* slept that night in Bear's house.

Next day—it was really next year, because one night in the land of supernatural beings is equivalent to a year in the land of mortals—Black Bear said:

"I make you a shaman (I, p. 539). One end of your bow, as far as the middle, will be as if coated with power. If you have a quarrel with a man just wave that end towards him and he will fall dead. If you wish him to come to life again, wave the other end and he will be revived."

Then Black Bear took off his pelt and gave it to *Slɪklɪ*, saying, "If you want to strike down several people, put on my skin, scatter eagle down on it, and then shake yourself. The down will fly in all directions and when it lights on your enemies it will cause them to fall to the ground. Their arms, legs, bodies, wherever the down has touched them, will swell, so that they will be unable to get up again. Unless you recall the fluff to yourself they will die. Now I will take you home."

Slɛklɛ set out with Black Bear, but when they reached the edge of the woods the latter returned. Instead of at once entering his father's house, *Slɛklɛ* went to the back of it where he shook the planking, and disturbed his younger sister, *'ɛnllălăn·a*, who was within. She went out to investigate, and ran in again, calling out to *Sɛmsiutaăkɛs:*

"Mother, mother, *Slɛklɛ* has come back."

But her mother answered, "You liar. Your brother has long been dead."

The little girl went out again, and when she returned a second time to tell the same story, *Sɛmsiutaăkɛs* herself went out. She was almost overcome with joy at seeing her long-lost son.

Slɛklɛ would not enter the house until *Nusxeq* had built for him a raised platform behind the fire and had scattered sand on the floor. When this was done he crawled through a hole in the roof direct to the staging. That evening *Slɛklɛ* called *'ɛnllălăn·a*, saying,

"Tomorrow I am going to *Nux̣ălk*, [Bella Coola]. I do not wish to mar our parents' pleasure at my return by telling them of my departure, so say nothing about it now; but tomorrow, when they discover my absence, you can tell them where I have gone and that it will be all right."

Slɛklɛ slept that night in his parents' house.

In the morning he assumed the form of a black bear and set off. In those early days there were no trees, so he was able to travel without stopping to pick a path and soon reached the village of *Älqălăxl* near the mouth of the *Pe·ɛslɛ*. Here he again changed himself to a man, wearing a black bear-skin blanket. At this point *Slɛklɛ* met a man and the two became *sătɛx*, boon companions. *Slɛklɛ* went to all the houses in *Älqălăxl* and invited the young people to gather on a level piece of ground near the river, saying that they would see something peculiar. When they had assembled he suddenly changed himself to a black bear and ran to and fro among the startled crowd. Then he retransformed himself to human form, whereupon all the girls fell in love with him as something new, strange, and altogether desirable. But *Slɛklɛ* only laughed at them.

Then his friend said, "*Sătai·*, why don't you go across the river and repeat your performance at *Slɛkiutl*?"

So *Slɛklɛ* and his friend crossed in a river dug-out. They called the young people of *Q̣ɛmpo·ts* and *Slɛkiutl* together on a level piece of ground below the latter village and here *Slɛklɛ* repeated his performance. As before, many of the women fell in love with him; but the men, their

*539 husbands and lovers, were so angry at the interloper that they decided to raid Green Bay. *Slsklə*'s friend, however, learnt of this plan and told his comrade. "All right," replied *Slsklə*, "if they dare to do so I will show them my power. Of course you will have to accompany them, but when the attack is launched stay a short distance to one side. You will not be hurt."

Slsklə now determined to return home. But the raiders, who were assembling at *Kit·co*, a point on the south side of North Bentinck Arm about a quarter mile from the head, had taken all the canoes, so the best *Slsklə*'s friend could obtain for him was the broken bow of a river canoe. In this frail craft he reached *Änusx̣*, on the north side of North Bentinck Arm about one mile from the head, without difficulty, and there he took on the form of a black bear once more. In this guise he travelled so rapidly that he reached Green Bay long before the raiders.

Once more in human form, *Slsklə* said to his parents, "A Bella Coola war-party is on its way to attack us, because they are angry at the way I have attracted their women. Stay inside the house, and all will be well."

Before long the hostile canoes appeared in close formation near the beach. *Slsklə* had donned his bear blanket, over which he had strewed a large quantity of eagle down. He now shook himself. As Black Bear had promised, the down flew in all directions and those of the enemy on whom it lighted fell helpless to the bottom of their canoes, their arms, legs, heads, or bodies swollen beyond recognition. After a time *Slsklə* called back the down, thus curing his victims. As he did so he told his father's herald to call out to the attackers that they must never again try to raid Green Bay. In spite of their discomfiture many of the Bella Coola rashly landed to press the assault, but *Slsklə* climbed on to the roof of the house, from which point he struck them down with the death-dealing end of his bow. When the abortive attack had ended with the death of all those who had landed, *Slsklə*'s *sätux* came to shore and requested him to restore his relatives to life. The two walked among the corpses, the friend pointing out his relations, whom *Slsklə* revived with the life-giving end of his bow. Each of those brought back to life begged for a friend, which *Slsklə* granted, until finally he had restored all those whom he had slain.

In their gratitude many of the Bella Coola besought *Slsklə* to accept their daughters as wives. He took only one wife, but by this marriage
[582] friendly relations were established between Green Bay and Bella Coola, and ever since that time the people of the two places have intermarried and been on the best of terms.

Nusxeq had a younger brother whose name was *Sınxäkila*. The latter moved across North Bentinck Arm to *Sätlia*, the southeast point between North and South Bentinck Arms. Here he married and in time became the father of a daughter, *Ämk̇pls*, who was about the same age as *Nusxeq*'s daughter *'ɛnllälän·a*. On one occasion when *Nusxeq* took his daughter on a visit to his brother, the two girls enjoyed playing together very much.

A short time after this *Sınxäkila* became a shaman. He saw a copper house with a loon totem-pole emerge from the ocean near *Sätlia*; it was the house of *Q̇omoqwa*, lord of the under-water world. *Q̇omoqwa* was inside with his long hair extending from beneath his huge hat. He greeted *Sınxäkila* and gave him the wonderful copper house to live in. As a result of this supernatural experience *Sınxäkila* was able to give his daughter the names, *Känusläliäm*, "Pretty Copper," and *Äłł'xmän·a*, "The Clang of Copper."

Unaware of her uncle's good fortune, *'ɛnllälän·a* again went to visit *Ämk̇pls*. She was amazed at the beautiful house, and was filled with envy of her cousin's names and of the luxurious copper room in which she lived in one of the front corners of the house. And *Ämk̇pls* had become too proud to play with her former friend. This made *'ɛnllälän·a* so miserable that she went home at once and begged her father to get her a nice house too.

After some deliberation *Nusxeq* married, fictitiously, his daughter to *Ämk̇pls*. As a result of the exchange of presents which ensued, *'ɛnllälän·a* obtained many copper articles as well as the name *Äłł'xmän·a*, and *Ämk̇pls* received a Cannibal dance with the name *'Łɛmdimut*, of which the incubus (II, p. 78) was a snake. The repository of this name is beneath a large boulder at Green Bay, where, too, is that of a Cannibal dancer, *Kwala·tstımut*.

Secure in the wealth which *Q̇omoqwa* had brought him, *Sınxäkila* was able to marry his daughter, fictitiously, to many chiefs. He always gave with her presents of copper. When *Ämk̇pls* was old enough she was married to a *Nulleax* chief.

ORIGIN MYTH OF *Nusxeq*
(*Second version told as a mere story*)

Once, long ago, at Green Bay a boy, walking along a path seeking suitable wood for a bow, stepped in some black bear dung which he angrily rubbed off on the grass. Soon he met a bear, who was annoyed at what he had done and asked him to come to his home. The two set off together, travelling easily owing to the power possessed by all bears of passing through ridges and rocks without effort. They reached a house within a mountain, where others had assembled for a potlatch. It was mid-winter. Bears perform *kusiut* dances as men do and dance through the winter, but they lack the ability to become shamans. The lad told his guide that he was hungry, whereupon the latter reached down and took off the small dimple from one side of his haunch, put in it a minute helping of salmon roe, and gave to his guest. The boy was angry at the meagreness of his portion, but his host told him to eat as much as he could since the supply was inexhaustible. The youth ate and ate, until he became fat, but he could make no impression on the food.

After a time the lad returned home to Green Bay. Search-parties had scoured the woods for him without success, but his mother was weeping for him as dead. He remained outside, but called her by name. A younger brother, hearing him, told his mother, but she did not believe him at first; finally she went outside where she saw her long-lost son. He bade her spread fresh sand on the floor, and when this was done he went in.

As a result of his visit to the bear's home, the youth obtained a small but remarkable canoe with a wonderful paddle. In this he and his partner used to travel. One end of the paddle held aloft kept at a distance the strongest wind, and smoothed a patch of water before the canoe, so that the one man paddling was able to make phenomenal headway. The two used to visit villages within a convenient radius so that the bear-boy might seduce the women. The partner would remain in the settlement to allay suspicion, while his friend would go to the woods behind and, by his supernatural power, will that women should come to him. He repeated this practice so often that the inhabitants of *Q̂omqo·ts* decided to kill him and his whole family, and endeavoured to take advantage of one of his visits to their village. His canoe was on the beach, and to prevent his return to Green Bay they destroyed it and all of their own that were drawn up in the vicinity. The partner saw the deed, and transmitted the news of it through the air to his friend, who rejoined him. One canoe was not entirely wrecked, so they took a small piece of the side that was left, and on it paddled to a point on the north side of North Bentinck Arm about one-half mile from its head. Here the bear-boy transformed himself into a bear, and in this guise was able to travel rapidly overland to Green Bay, while his partner continued to paddle in that direction close to shore.

On reaching home the bear-boy said to his father:

"A war-party is coming against us entirely on my account."

"I know nothing about it," his father replied.

"You stay inside, I will deal with them," his son continued.

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948
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He made a platform on the roof from which he watched and soon with his marvellous vision he was able to descry the fleet leaving *Q̣omqo·ts*. 5:34 r As he had willed, his enemies drew near on canoes lashed together, and furnished with platforms from which stones could be thrown. When they reached Green Bay, he projected his bear power at them and they succumbed. He allowed them to recover, again they came on, and again he felled them, and so for several times until he had killed them all. Then he came down from his station on the roof and told his father and mother to pick out their friends.

"I shall resuscitate them," he said, "and throw the others into the ocean, otherwise the stench would be oppressive."

His parents pointed out to him their friends, whom he revived. Each thus restored begged him to save some friend; these asked for others, until he had revivified all. His father, a chief, gave a feast, at which marriages between Green Bay and *Q̣omqo·ts* people were arranged.

ORIGIN MYTH OF *Sätlia*[11]

In the beginning of time there was a village on the lower Fraser, in which everything was abalone-shell. It was there that Raven came to earth from above and assisted the chief, *Dodosonx̣*ʷ'. The two set off together in a canoe to visit *Łâlia*, a town in which everything was copper and where lived a chief, whose name was likewise *Łâlia*, with his daughter *Łâliaaiuts*. They reached this settlement in safety and *Łâlia* gave his guests a copper canoe, a copper box in which were all kinds of foods reduced to small bulk, and a *sısaok* dance whistle. Finally, on *Dodosonx̣*ʷ' he bestowed his daughter *Łâliaaiuts*, as wife. Then Raven, *Dodosonx̣*ʷ', and the latter's wife returned to the abalone-shell town.

*Dodosonx̣*ʷ' and his wife set out in the copper canoe to distribute the gifts which he had received from *Łâlia*. First they went to the Haida country and gave a whistle; the Haida chief blew on it and the whole face of the world was altered. Although but one whistle had been received, the supply was inexhaustible; another always appeared when the first had been given away. *Dodosonx̣*ʷ' returned from the land of the Haida to his home on the Fraser, and again set out with his wife in the copper canoe. He gave one whistle to the China Hat people; one to the people of a Bella Bella village; and one to the people of the present Bella Bella village, the recipients in each case giving in return some blood to *Dodosonx̣*ʷ' and his wife. From Bella Bella he went to Rivers Inlet where he

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[11] Related by Captain Myers. The following important myth has been recorded in detail by Boas (p. 50). The present writer was able to obtain only a fragmentary version from an old man already in his dotage.

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gave a whistle to the village of *Wanuq*, and also threw overboard some of the fish that were in the copper box. They became olachen, from which sprang all the olachen of Rivers Inlet. *Dadosong*ʷ and his wife proceeded up Rivers Inlet, giving a whistle to each village until they reached the head of the inlet, whence they journeyed to *Samhotl*, a settlement on the lake beyond, and from there to the town at the head of the lake, in each depositing the usual whistle. They portaged the copper canoe along the overland trail running thence to the head of South Bentinck Arm, and in due course reached *Äsiax*ʷ, at the head of the fiord. Here *Dadosong*ʷ gave a whistle and a number of olachen, the latter being the progenitors of the olachen in that inlet. They travelled down South Bentinck Arm, delaying at the various settlements to give a whistle and olachen to each. Their stopping-places included *Q̣wapa*, *Nusk*ʷ and the last *Q̣ankulst*, an island in the fiord. Thence the copper canoe ascended North Bentinck Arm to Bella Coola, where *Dadosong*ʷ and *Łäliaasiuts* built a house on the site of the present *Älpäläsl*. They lived in it for a number of years, until the people of Bella Coola protested so strongly against the din of the whistles which kept sounding continuously that they moved away.

*Dadosong*ʷ and his wife travelled in their copper canoe to *Sätlia*, the point between North and South Bentinck Arms, where they built a huge copper house. In this they lived for a great many years and many children were born to them. The people from Bella Coola were friendly with the *Sätlia* people, whom they frequently visited and with whom they exchanged presents, and sought to marry the children of *Dadosong*ʷ. Among them was a lad, *Änuqpmlaix*, who was very unhappy because of his father's neglect and lack of affection. He made a bow and hunted ducks for four days. Then he lay and wept for four days. On the fourth day, as he lay on the beach weeping and sleeping, he heard a voice:

"Get up, get up; think of your friends."

A man led him to a house that had risen from the sea, in which seals were being given away. The man wished him to enter by the door, but *Änuqpmlaix* was afraid because beneath it lay an evil monster, a *sp̣ämtsk*, which lived on the flesh of human corpses. However, he succeeded in entering the back of the house.

Here the narrator stopped abruptly.

SECOND ORIGIN MYTH OF *Sätlia*[33]

Long ago, when the world was first populated, there came down in human form to *Sätlia*, near the junction of North and South Bentinck

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[33] Related by Steamboat Annie.

Arms, two brothers, *Snax̣hākila* and *Miai'sila*, with their sister, *Sıllslān·i*. *Ālquntām* had provided them with means of sustenance; *Sıllslān·i* brought cranberries and *Miai'sila* a model salmon-trap, such as is used in salt water. The three had no house, but *Ālquntām* sent them some logs of driftwood from which *Snax̣hākila* constructed a shelter, which they called *Yantsänl* because it was made of flotsam. On the roof *Snax̣hākila* placed a huge copper with which the smoke vent could be closed, and immediately above the door a wooden loon kept calling incessantly. 539*

When they had been on this earth for some time *Snax̣hākila* became a shaman from the sight of a copper house that rose from the depths of the ocean in mid-channel. He paddled out to it in his canoe, climbed to the roof on a conveniently placed ladder, and went from the roof down inside. Then he discovered that it was the house of *Q̓omoqwa*, who was sitting in the middle behind the fire, his long hair protruding from beneath his huge hat. All around the walls were paintings of different denizens of the water world, and various creatures were sharing the house. As *Snax̣hākila* stood by the front door looking inwards he saw on his right a number of seals sitting around a small fire in one corner of the house. In the opposite corner, on his left, also by a fire, was a very old woman; in some unexplained manner *Snax̣hākila* knew that her name was *Nınixwanaix*. In the right-hand rear corner a man, *Nusqwal*, was seated by his fire, and in the remaining corner, by a fourth fire, was another man, *Nunuxemlaix*. *Xaqānts*, the Heron, was stalking back and forth behind the fire; as his dignified gait shows, he is a chief, and as such has the chiefly names, *Numelsdımut*, *ıxwappātsdjut*, *Ānuxlnımdımut*, and *Ānutceklāmdimut*. Near the left wall, opposite the fire, was a large box, *Snulkānāls*, containing heavy coppers, *tskankdımut*, and mice, which gnawed incessantly. A porcupine and a grizzly bear were playing together in the back-room. Halibut was lying outside the front door so that anyone jumping down outside leaped through its open mouth into its stomach. Whale was likewise lying outside, parallel to the front wall of the house. The totem-pole of this strange house was *K̓ıdxta*, a supernatural ocean being. [551]

From his seat behind the fire *Q̓omoqwa* greeted *Snax̣hākila* in a kindly fashion. The chief wrapped some of his own hair around a stick and pulled, thus breaking off a few strands, which he gave to his guest. He then told him to take three names for the use of himself and his children forever: they were, *Tskankdımut*, the coppers, *Āmkpls*, the mice, and *Snulkānāls*, the box in which these were contained. After spending a few hours with *Q̓omoqwa*, *Snax̣hākila* returned to land, whereupon a gale arose and the house sank beneath the waves. [551]

*539 In course of time *Snaphkhila* became so wealthy that he was able to call people from far and near for a potlatch. He built a house identical in every particular with that of *Ḳomoqwa* as he had seen it. He bestowed on his children not only the names which *Ḳomoqwa* gave to him, but also [551] two which he took from what he had seen, *Ḳonts*, the whale which was outside the front of the house, and *Łālikhus*, the significance of which could not be determined.

[552] These two designations have since been transmitted in this family, and now been bestowed on a dog, there being no children left.

ORIGIN MYTH OF *Tāl io**

In the beginning of time, *Ālquntām* sent down to this world a man, *Āl imulsaix*, with his two sisters, *Ailsumka*, "The Abalone-Shell Woman," and *Aiblaān iatlias*, "The One with Abalone on Her Hat." The three landed on an island several miles in circumference, formed of an enormous abalone-shell; its location is now unknown, but it was somewhere in the south, presumably not far from Vancouver. Here they dwelt for some time and began to construct a house for themselves out of the shell. All the time they longed to travel in search of a desirable place to settle, but they lacked means of transportation. At this juncture Raven appeared, and offered them a canoe if they would promise to use it. They readily agreed and presently the supernatural bird returned with one. It was a *sḳāmtsk*, one of the mythical monsters who live beneath the ocean and suck down small craft by opening their mouths.

Āl imulsaix and his sisters embarked. They had decorated their hats and blankets with abalone-shell and took with them a large store of the same material. Raven perched on the bow and croaked whenever they drew near a landing-place. After travelling a considerable distance, they saw smoke rising, and presently noticed a house. *Āl imulsaix* landed to investigate and found it occupied by a solitary woman, *Tlakwadilayudwa*; the place where she lived was called *Nuqwdlas*, probably on Schooner Pass. *Āl imulsaix* asked her to accompany the party as his sister (meaning here a non-marriageable female relative, not an own sister). She agreed after much discussion. The four continued their travels until they drew near Fort Rupert, where they saw more smoke. As before, *Āl imulsaix* landed and found another solitary woman, *Kwal'hila'yukwa*, whom he also persuaded to join the group as his sister. The five now passed on to Rivers Inlet, where Raven vanished. The others thought he had left them but, unknown to them all, he had entered *Tlakwadilayudwa*'s body. They paddled as far as the lake at the head of Rivers Inlet where they abandoned their craft and set out on foot along the overland path to the head of South Bentinck Arm. 539*

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*Related by Mrs. Schooner.

Midway along this trail the travellers saw a house, called *Tcikmaiat* because it could lengthen itself at will. From this supernatural sight each of the five became a shaman. This house was a replica of the one above in which mankind was made and, like it, contained many rooms, in each of which lived an individual speaking a different language. *Äl'imlaix* failed to understand them and in his annoyance scattered the speakers, who fled to different parts of the coast where each increased and perpetuated his own language. This is why the various coastal tribes have their own tongues; if *Äl'imlaix* had been able to understand them in *Tcikmaiat* there would be no diversity of speech now. [824]

Various dances were taking place in the rooms within the house. There was a constant din from the large whistles used in *cuscé* ceremonial which sounded of their own accord and were continually answered by Echo. Only at this place and at *Nusqalst* did Echo appear to the first people; hence only the descendants of *Äl'imlaix* and of the *Nusqalst* people have the right to portray him in their dances. *Anu'likmalaix* (II, p. 8) stood near the door; when at last she called out, the *cuscé* whistles became silent as if in fear. [424] [535]

Continuing their journey the travellers reached *Tāl'io*, at the head of South Bentinck Arm, where a solitary man, *Naxoemda*, was living. At this place *Tlakmakilayakam* gave birth to Raven, who was born as a boy with the legs of a raven. *Äl'imlaix* named him *calpiltsamqenadjinai*. After a short sojourn at *Tāl'io* they ascended the river, and presently *Äl'imlaix* saw a female grizzly bear, whom he also invited to join the party as his sister. The bear accepted and he endeavoured to change the creature to a woman. He had fair success with the paws and face; that is why these parts of a bear are similar to those of men at the present day, but the beast's hairy hide defied his efforts and in disgust he told it to run away. Before banishing it, he bade the animal always show a friendly disposition to human beings, wherefore grizzly bears at *Tāl'io* have never been known to attack a person. The party proceeded up the river to Mount *Sinp'*, where *Äl'imlaix* found a repository (II, p. 8) through the discovery of which he became a Cannibal with the name *Smaikal'ku* and an eagle as incubus. From this point they returned to *Tāl'io*, where they settled permanently. [825]

Many of the names which occur in this myth are still in use. Mrs. Schooner's designation as chief is *Tlakmakilayakam*, a name that can be used by either man or woman; in the former case the suffix *yakam* is 551

551 dropped. *Kwa'kila'yakwa* is held by a Fort Rupert chief. Several *kusiut* names, with dances, were obtained from *Tcitāmilai* where the travellers saw them being performed; among them were *Ānadakānais* and *Dadeqpaa*, which are now used by two Bella Coola women. *Ālinamka* is now a Cannibal (II, p. 71) name. At *Tāl'io Ālāmilais* gave a *kusiut* dance, and with his own power made there a repository as if he had brought it with him from *Tcitāmilai*. This was only possible because of his supernatural power as one of the first people, strengthened by his becoming a shaman through seeing *Tcitāmilai*.

SECOND ORIGIN MYTH OF *Tāl'io*[*]

539 In the beginning, there came down to the Skeena River,[*] *Nuxpāpa*, *Nuxqomda*, *Wāqasli*, and their younger sister *Nuliomomandia*; they brought from *Āqanita* some of the large cone-shaped whistles used for *kusiut* ceremonials.[*] The three travelled all over the coast seeking a place in which to settle, and always the whistles kept calling out of their own accord, giving advice. Finally they decided to locate at *Tāl'io*, the head of South Bentinck Arm.

When they had lived there for some time, the neighbours objected to the din of the whistles, which drove away olachen and herring, so *Nuxqomda* built a high, narrow mound of refuse, on the tip of which he constructed his house. The building was peculiar; its door opened horizontally and used to close with a crash when anyone entered. On either side of the hill there lived a *snənq*, whose keen ears could hear the wailing of an infant at any distance. In those ancient days, these beasts were [172] like dogs and did not annoy mortals; they were servants to *Nuxqomda*. One day he learnt that a raiding-party was approaching, but instead of being afraid he instructed the *snənq* to use their power when it drew near. When the hostile canoes came in sight the two creatures reversed their eyeballs, causing a blinding flash which stunned the occupants of the canoes. After a little they recovered consciousness and again came on, but again the *snənq* reversed their eyeballs with a like result. When this had happened several times the raiders withdrew discouraged.

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[*] Related by Mrs. Willie Mack.

[*] It is not uncommon for the Skeena to figure as the place where some of the first people came to earth; but few descended nearer to Bella Coola than that region.

[*] This prerogative is less common among the Bella Coola than the Bella Bella.

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THIRD ORIGIN MYTH OF *Tälio*[1]

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Long, long ago, when the first people came to earth it was very different from now. There were no trees on the mountains, all were bare and hard like rock and flatter than at present. There was no sun, since it was contained in a *nusxemda*, a light container, within *Älquntäm*'s house. Raven desired to get the sun for this world, so he went to the house and asked *Älquntäm* for it. The supreme being refused and allowed Raven only to play with it on the floor. Raven, too wily to be satisfied with this, waited his opportunity to open the door and threw out the sun, breaking the container as he did so. In this way it was obtained for mankind.

About this time *Älquntäm* sent down to the head of Rivers Inlet a man, *Kaaxpaklänam*, and a woman, *Nuqilixpaikwa*. At this time the only clothing worn was made of yellow cedar-bark and animal skins. The couple begot children, who in turn married and had offspring, but *Kaaxpaklänam* did not grow old. Near the settlement there was a lake, on the shore of which his grandchildren often played, in spite of constant danger from a *spämtsk* which lived in it, and which had, in fact, sucked in several victims. This *spämtsk* was a creature as big as a house, which could rise or sink in the water at will and was able to suck in its victims through its mouth-door. *Kaaxpaklänam* realized that *Älquntäm* had given him power to slay this evil monster. Accordingly, he boldly entered the water and succeeded in passing into the interior of the house-stomach through an opening in the side; even he would have perished if he had tried the front door, which was likewise the mouth. Inside was a chief, whose name was *Spämtsk*, like that of his house; he wore a huge hat with weasels running around the brim. *Kaaxpaklänam* asked *Spämtsk* whence he had obtained all the many wonderful things hanging on the wall.

"If you are brave," the chief replied, "you will be able to get not only my possessions, but my house and my name as well."

So it transpired. *Kaaxpaklänam* remained for some time in *Spämtsk*'s house and executed some wonderful paintings on its walls; then summoned the people to come and see them. Four times he did this, using the house for his potlatches; then he left.

He set out for the south shore of North Bentinck Arm about two miles from its head. As he travelled a raven stalked along the road before him, carrying a copper in each hand and calling out the road he should follow. On the site selected he built a house, *Tsäkwalsil*, so large that the front door was invisible from the back-room. Within there lived the members of the different coastal tribes: Fort Rupert Indians, Rivers Inlet people, Bella Bella, Kimsquit, and Bella Coola, each group of which used its [829]

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[1] Related by Robert Hood.

* 539 829 special type of whistle. *Kaaspakhānam* remained in this house until he had given four potlatches. Then he removed to *Āpst'i*, near *Tāl'io* River on South Bentinck Arm. His house still stands there, but it has become an island around which the clouds mass whenever a hostile raiding-party is approaching, so as to conceal from them their objective.

[197] From their long residence in this house *Tāl'io* people understand the language of their Bella Bella, Fort Rupert, and other coastal neighbours better than do the Bella Coola.

FOURTH ORIGIN MYTH OF *Tāl'io*[illegible]

*539 Among the first people sent down to earth were four who landed at the river *Tcold*, on the mainland opposite Fort Rupert. Their names were: *Ninitsamlaix*, a man who became the leader of the group; *Nayal'alaix*, a woman; *Ānuskmatlm*, a man; and another woman, *Snanmatlmān·a*. They met a wasp, which helped them by pointing out the proper road to follow and by killing evil things which barred their path. With this assistance they were able to reach *Tāl'io*, where they settled and where *Ninitsamlaix* plucked a number of twigs from the branches of a spruce tree near the ocean. These twigs became the people over whom he was chief.

ORIGIN MYTH OF *Nulēl*[illegible]

In the beginning of time there came down to Mount *Smaly*, near the mouth of the Dean River, two brothers, *Xemcus* and *Sinaqsil*, their sister *Qālms*, and their herald *Qāpst'īl*. *Xemcus* came as an eagle, but at once assumed human form; apparently the others had always been human. They moved down, and formed a settlement at *Nulēl*, near the mouth of the Dean River. *Xemcus* had brought with him as a present from *Āłquntām*, some olachen, called by their supernatural name, *dipsaaiyan·a*, which he threw into the water. They increased rapidly and became the ancestors [825] of all the olachen at Kimsquit. Thus provided with food, the brothers prospered so that they were able to give many potlatches. In course of time *Qālms* was married to *Nuskila*, a chief who had come to earth on the upper Dean River.

At one of their potlatches *Sinaqsil* performed a *Heiyākam* dance, as *Āłquntām* had instructed him to do before leaving *Nusmāt·a*. Valuable

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[illegible] Fragmentary version, related by Billy Pollard.

[illegible] For another version see Boas, p. 65. It was impossible to obtain this myth from any of the descendants of *Xemcus*; it is unlikely that the above is more than an outline.

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presents were distributed to validate the name, *Tlaiyakum*, which *Simsquil* had chosen for himself.

Simsquil married a Bella Bella woman who brought with her the prerogative of a dance with respect to the devil-fish. In Bella Bella this one was connected both with the *kusiut* and the *sisaok*, but in Kimsquit it was performed only as a *kusiut* dance. It was first given there by *Kaipmaw i*, a relative of *Simsquil*, and has since been performed in like fashion in Kimsquit. Their daughter received the Bella Bella name, *Tollos*, which has since remained in Kimsquit. [424 575 535 551]

ORIGIN MYTH OF *Āpsi i*[58]

In the beginning of time there came to *Āpsi i*, on the east side of the Dean River, about one mile from the sea, *Stamanaiha* and his three younger brothers. They brought a stone hammer as their present from *Nusmata*. After they had lived some time on this earth, *Stamanaiha* asked Yalikimat to have a canoe ready for him on the morrow. By the next day Yalikimat had completed a fine craft. *Stamanaiha* was delighted and spent four days fitting it out; then set out with his three younger brothers for a trip to the far north, where he knew by report that abalone-shells were to be found.[59] The four did not know the route and were constantly penetrating into fiords from which there was no exit; however, they persevered and were helped by all whom they encountered, *Stamanaiha*'s name being well known. After a month's voyage, they reached their goal. They found themselves before a lofty precipice falling sheer into the ocean with a cavern visible in it at very low tide. This they boldly entered. At first they were deluged with falling star-fish; in fact, their canoe would have been sunk by the weight of these if the youngest brother had not held up his cedar-bark cloak to ward them off. A little farther on they found countless abalone-shells, with which they swiftly filled the canoe, fearing lest the tide should rise sufficiently to prevent their return if they stayed to investigate further. Once safely outside they camped, and the eldest brother took the opportunity to bestow names on the younger brothers for things they had seen or done on the way. He called his second brother *Nuxamisaiq*, "The Warrior," as if he had fought against the abalone; the third *Ālus limdm*, "Falling Star-Fish," and the youngest *Ālacqas*, "The Road-Maker," a reference to the

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[58] Related by Jim Pollard. Boas (p. 60), has recorded a similar myth from Bella Coola with different characters.

[59] The Bella Coola are emphatic in stating that abalone-shell comes from the north or the east; possibly this may be explained by an indirect trade route. [487]

539 manner in which he had shielded them from the falling fish. *Ixwmatko* alone kept his original name.

When returning they made presents of abalone-shell[29] to everyone they met, and reaching Kimsquit they made very valuable gifts to all the people. The four had been absent about six months, and as they approached their home the three elder brothers poked fun at *Älucqat*, saying:

"You will find that your wife has gone to another husband while ours will be waiting for us."

They found the reverse to be true. *Älucqat*'s wife alone had remained faithful to her absent husband; all the others had taken new consorts. The three fickle wives regretted what they had done as soon as they saw the wealth brought back by their former husbands but it was too late to change their course, so they were left lamenting. Many people were rather jealous of *Ixwmatko*'s success, but he distributed valuable presents to all. Soon after this the three brothers married new wives, refusing to take back their former ones, much as the latter desired it.

Another informant stated that the first settler at this village was a single man, *Iwatlko*, who brought a stone hammer as a present from *Alquntäm*.

ORIGIN MYTH OF *Nutsqwulh*[30]

In the beginning of time *Alquntäm* sent down to the Dean River four brothers, *Qwaxwaxwat*, *Yutlko*, *Sputlkilhnais*, *Tsaalaxlimut*, and their sister *Snimalxa*. They brought with them a herald, *Nuqwumaluls*, who was a kingfisher, and two men, *Ixwmtls* and *Snitsija*, who had the prerogative of dancing at weddings. The five came as black bears, and for a long time retained that form. *Yutlko* carried with him from *Nusmäta* several mountainhides, a stone axe, some dyed cedar-bark, sticks for making fire, and the prerogative of a *sisaok* dance. After tarrying a few days at their landing place, the party set out down the river, with *Nuqwumaluls* flying in front as guide. He was a kingfisher at the time and used to make short flights with quivering wings, and then stop until his bear friends had caught up with him, exactly as these birds do at the present time when a canoe travels up a river. On reaching *Nutsqwulh*, "The Place of Many Spawning Sockeye Salmon," about a mile and a quarter from the mouth of the river, on the south-east side, they camped for the night.

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[29] This was formerly valued very highly, both for its use as beads and ornaments, and because it had to be imported from a great distance.

[30] Related by Jim Pollard.

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Next morning they found a house in readiness for them, a short distance from the bank; its name was *Nuxwalqlaxm*, and it had been created for them by *Alquntam* who had selected this spot for their residence. It resembled other houses except that the door was in a back corner instead of in the middle of the front because bears must not approach the river, and the five still had ursine characteristics. The salmon would have been frightened if they had lived too near. The paintings on the back walls were of Kingfisher. 539 F

Chips from their firewood floated downstream to the point where *Smaiaxw* (I, p. 332) lived. Judging that someone was encamped above him, he set out to investigate. He met *Yatlic* and entered into conversation with him, finally asking if he, *Smaiaxw*, might marry *Yatlic's* sister, *Sximana*, "The Light-Bearer." *Yatlic* agreed, and the two were married in due course. At this ceremony a marriage song given by *Alquntam* was first used.[39]

Ayayayaw and his brothers made a special kind of fish-trap, in which they caught large quantities of trout and steel-head salmon, and below them *Smaiaxw* and his family were also catching large quantities of salmon. The two settlements combined to give a potlatch. The brothers built an extension to the house to accommodate their guests, and when all were seated a representation of a black bear emerged from the room at the back of the house, imitating the appearance and actions of its inmates when first they arrived on this earth. The artifacts brought by *Ayayayaw* and his brothers from above were displayed to the guests, as has since been done on similar occasions by their descendants. At this potlatch the name *Nalqlaxlaix* was given to *Sximana*, having reference to the tabooed house with the rear doorway.

Yatlic once sent his kingfisher herald up the river to discover whether or not there were people there, for at that time it was unknown country. He reported that there were, so *Yatlic* built a canoe, in the manner taught by Raven, and set off; en route he met the upstream settlers, who had likewise learnt the art of making canoes and were travelling downstream on an errand similar to his own.

The brothers used some of their wealth on one occasion to give a *kusiut dance*, at which they validated for *Nuxqmalaix* the Breaker (II, p. 122) name, *Nuntsumtlaix*. This refers to the way in which he had flown with quivering wings when a kingfisher, and as he danced he shook his hands in imitation of this. This name had been given him by *Alquntam*, as had also his third, *Olqlimut*, referring to his status as herald.

Smaiaxw and *Sximana* had many children who formed a bond between [538]

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[39] It has since been transmitted as a prerogative by the descendants of this couple. [424]

[538]

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539 [582] the people of Kimsquit and the Dean River, and ever since then intermarriages have been common.

ORIGIN MYTH OF *Sinal·os*

Soon after the first people had reached this earth *Ālquntäm* feared that as they increased, they might quarrel about land tenure. Accordingly he sent down to *Sinal·os*, on the Dean River thirty-five miles from the sea, three brothers, *Ālquntäm*, *syayayayai*, and *Ëäliltcoa*, a name in many [551] cases used by women, with their sister *Syapis·tl*. He gave the oldest brother instructions to divide the land among the different villages. *Ālquntäm* came in the guise of a mountain goat, but promptly sent his animal cloak back to the land above, before starting downstream. To the inhabitants of each town he allotted certain valleys in the vicinity to serve as hunting-grounds, and told the people that these, and only these, were to be theirs forever. After reaching the coast, he travelled down Dean Inlet as far as the Bella Bella country, likewise allotting land to the different settlements, and marking each boundary with a stick. After finishing his task, *Ālquntäm* returned up the Dean River to his brothers. The three built a weir that spanned the river, and in it they caught so many steel-head salmon that the Carriers used to come from great distances to buy from them. *Syapis·tl* was married to a chief living on the lower part of the river, and her brothers, too, came below for their wives. *Ālquntäm* ultimately moved to *Nusqälsts*, on the east side of the Dean River, twenty-five miles from the sea.

syayayayai had come from above in the form of a deer. After taking [925] off this cloak, he released it as an animal, which became the ancestor of all the deer near Kimsquit. They did not like *Sinal·os*, where it was very cold, so they moved to *Nikiets*, on Dean Inlet, about three miles below Kimsquit, and there built their town. Unfortunately, the snowfall was so heavy that they had much trouble in lighting their fires; sometimes as much as ten feet of snow fell in a single night.

"Please, *Ëäliltcoa*," said the deer, "don't keep falling on us."

In the language of man, snow is *kai*, and *Ëäliltcoa* means, "Copper One," but the language of deer is quite different. The snow, unmoved by their appeals, continued to fall, until at last the deer held a meeting and resolved to move away to the outer coast near Bella Bella, and never [825] return again. They carried out this plan, and it is only within the last few years that some have come back, although for centuries some lived near Kimsquit.

Related by Jim Pollard.

ORIGIN MYTH OF *Äskltа*[46]

(539*

In the beginning of time *Älquntäm* sent down to *Äskltа*, Salmon House on the Dean River, *Noäkila*, his younger brother *Tcaqos*, and their sister *Swalkänäls*, "Box," so named from a supernatural box in the land above. *Tcaqos* brought a caribou with him, and released it on earth.[47] With these people came as herald, The Wasp of Heaven, who later assumed human form and guided them. *Tcaqos* at once moved inland to the country of the Carrier Indians, where he remained,[48] taking the adapted name *Q̣äqos*.

Noäkila, unprovided with a house or clothing, was so lonely and unhappy that for four days he lay hungry, inert and despondent, alone with his sister. *Älquntäm* had promised to provide for his welfare, and, four days after *Noäkila*'s landing, sent down the four supernatural carpenters to help him. *Yulätimut* at once cheered his drooping spirits by building him a house, which was a replica of *Nusmät·a* itself. *Noäkila* asked the third carpenter, *Mätläbälitcak*, to provide him with food, and the latter, obedient to *Älquntäm*'s instructions, whittled a steel-head salmon from maple wood and put it into the river. The fish came to life, swam, and jumped for a short time, but soon died. The carpenter tried several times with the same result. Then Raven appeared and gave him the bone which every steel-head salmon has in the back of its neck. *Mätläbälitcak* put this bone in one of his wooden models, and when he had thrown it in the river it swam strongly and survived. This fish multiplied so rapidly that *No kila* and his sister were able to support [825] themselves on this kind of salmon, which have been plentiful in the Dean River ever since.

After a time *Noäkila* decided to visit the people dwelling on the ocean. He asked *Mätläbälitcak* for a canoe, and the carpenter made him one in the form of an enormous merganser, that travelled without visible motive power. At that time the Dean River disappeared beneath a huge boulder a short distance above the sea, but the craft shattered the rock and opened a channel.[49]

At the mouth of the Dean River *Noäkila* met *Xemcua* and married his sister *Q̣äkma*, using at this ceremony a wordless marriage song given him by *Älquntäm*. They had many children and ever since that time [582] there have been intermarriages and friendly relations between the people of Salmon House and Kimsquit.

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[46] Related by Jim Pollard; for another version of this myth see Boas, p. 66.

[47] Its footprints can still be seen in the rocks near Salmon House.

[48] The obvious fact that the Carriers must already have been in the land does not strike the Bella Coola. They do not theorize on the subject, but if asked, [829] reply that they too were sent down from above at the same time.

[49] The canyon on this river marks the site of the obstruction.

*539 [551] The names embodied in this myth are still in use. That of *Noäkila* was validated at a potlatch during the winter of 1921, after being dormant since the death of the eighth *Noäkila*, an old man, which had taken place some thirty years previously.[50] To illustrate this myth a representation is made of the merganser canoe, a specimen of which, obtained by Mr. Harlan I. Smith, is now in the National Museum, Ottawa.

According to another version of this myth, *Noäkila* and his party came to earth at Anaham Lake, in the country of the Carriers, bringing with them the steel-head salmon. They first went to *Stuιx*, but *Noäkila* did not like the place, so released only a few of the fish. They returned to Anaham Lake, and from there went to Salmon House. They found this spot so desirable that they settled and set free their store of steel-head salmon. That is the reason why this fish is so plentiful in the Dean [825] River, and so relatively rare in the Bella Coola.

ORIGIN MYTH OF *Sä·tsk'*[51]

In the beginning of time *Älquntäm* constructed an abalone-shell covered post which reached from *Nusmät·a* to *Ältwolsqämus*, a mountain near the Kimsquit River, not far from its mouth. To this place came from above two men, *Smaoan*, "The First One," and his younger brother, *Omqomkilʟka*. The former flew down as an eagle, but the latter, in raven form, swarmed down the post, which vanished after he had reached the earth. *Smaoan* spread his wings, like a mother bird, to shelter his younger brother. *Älquntäm* had given *Omqomkilʟka* a box containing sockeye salmon, with instructions to throw them into the ocean, where they would increase rapidly to serve as food for him and his elder brother. He also taught the two how to build a salmon-weir to catch the fish. The brothers climbed down the mountain-side to the mouth of the Kimsquit River, where *Omqomkilʟka* became a man and sent back his raven cloak above. He then released the salmon as he had been instructed, and also another present from *Älquntäm*, a *mätsqus* (I, p. 525), which was to serve as bait not only for fish but also for wealth and goods.

Smaoan declined to assume human form immediately, so began to travel, and his younger brother, sad at being thus left alone, started to

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[173] [50] This was the only instance given of an approximation of the interval since the first peopling of the earth. The Bella Coola usually reply, "long, long ago," and have not questioned further. This myth was received from a reliable informant, but it is doubtful whether his statement concerning the "eighth" *Noäkila* would find credence among most Bella Coola. Even if it should be the eighth, that would be of little value in estimating the period at which the Bella Coola believe the earth to have been populated, since names may remain dormant for generations.

[51] Related by Jim Pollard.

make a salmon-weir. In accordance with *Älquntäm*'s instruction, 539*
Smaoan planned to make a circuit of the world seeking a suitable place
to settle. He started northward, in eagle form, scattering eagle down, [778]
wherefore this material has ever since been highly regarded and is used
as a symbol of peace. Owing, moreover, to the eagle down scattered on [821]
the mountains, there has always been much snow in that region.[13]

Sometimes as he travelled he assumed the form of the sun, for he was so powerful that nothing was impossible to him. Far in the north *Smaoan* obtained an enormous copper, which he carried back to Kimsquit without completing his original plan of circling the earth. He perched on a tree near his brother's almost completed salmon-weir.

"Why don't you change yourself to a human being?" *Omqomkilıka* inquired.

"I am waiting until our food is more plentiful," *Smaoan* replied. "Besides I have been to the far north where I obtained an enormous copper."

When the weir was completed and *Omqomkilıka* was catching many salmon, his brother at last decided to become a man. But instead of sending his cloak back above he animated it, as an eagle. *Smaoan* now became an ardent fisherman and was much annoyed by the thefts made by the bird, though he himself was responsible for it not having returned to *Nusmāt·a*. After about a year he suggested to *Omqomkilıka* that they should kill it, but the latter demurred, since it was the guise which *Älquntäm* had given *Smaoan*. The latter said nothing, but the next time he saw the eagle stealing his fish he killed the bird, without consulting his brother. No sooner had he done this than he felt sorry, but it was too late; he could not restore the eagle to life.

Owing to the salmon given them by *Älquntäm* the two brothers were now very prosperous, and *Smaoan* began to think of marriage. One day he noticed some chips floating down the Dean River, so he judged that people must be living on that stream. He set out to investigate, met *Yeālos*, and married his sister *Sximāna*, as has been described in a Dean River myth. To celebrate this event the two brothers prepared to invite people from far and near. First they lengthened their house to accommodate a large number; it was of the type known as *tcākwalotl*, though it could not expand without human agency. Then they painted their spoons with designs of the *mātsqus*, since they had brought that creature
with them from above. Now everything was ready and they summoned [424-
their guests. When all had assembled, *Smaoan* gave a *llaiyākam* dance 535]

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[13] The clouds which float over Kimsquit before a west wind are still called "*Smaoan*'s clouds," in memory of his journey. The myth fails to explain how *Smaoan* was responsible for these phenomena.

* 539 to commemorate the killing of the eagle. The text of his song described how he had come to this earth and how he had slain the bird which had [424] been his own cloak. This dance was duly validated by presents of [535] salmon, and has since been carried out by the descendants of *Smaoan*. It is assumed that the concept of such a dance was given to him by *Ālquntām* before he left *Nusmāt·a*, but he used his own discretion on this earth as to the actual reason for it.

At this gathering of people, virtually a potlatch, *Smaoan* took for himself the name *Ānuqplālaix*, "What Fills People." He chose this name with reference to the countless salmon caught in his weir.

Smaoan next travelled to Bella Bella seeking a wife. His fame and wealth were so well known that he was able to wed *Tlākwaitl*, the daughter of a powerful chief. She had the valued prerogative of wailing, a right which had been duly validated by presents. Her father told her that when she was going with *Smaoan* to Kimsquit she would pass *Yuyulʌmxl*, a man who had been turned to stone *on the skyline above the western* side of Dean Channel, about five miles from its head, and that unless she wailed as she passed him her children would be unable to enjoy this prerogative. The reason for this injunction is not now understood; it is merely recognized that as *Yuyulʌmxl* became petrified near *Smaoan*'s home he became, in some manner, a crest. As the canoe bearing *Tlākwaitl* passed *Yuyulʌmxl* she began to wail and weep, nor could her husband soothe her. He, for his part, told the herald, *Nuslliuq*, who had come with him from above, to call out as follows:

"Hello! Crest, our chief has married a Bella Bella woman; as you are his crest, so are you hers."

[484] When *Nuslliuq* had called this a second time the stone man answered. [763] Ever since, passers-by have addressed *Yuyulʌmxl*, and a failure on his part to reply is considered an omen of death.

Tlākwaitl brought her husband several valuable prerogatives, a *sısaok* dance with the large cone-shaped whistles, several *kusiut* dance rights, as well as some dyed cedar-bark. According to one of *Smaoan*'s descendants, this is how the *sısaok* ritual reached Kimsquit. Among the Bella Bella, whales can only be eaten by chiefs, and *Smaoan* received this right from his father-in-law. The latter also gave his son-in-law a dead whale, which was towed behind the canoe towards Kimsquit. *Smaoan* knew that his people would object to it being brought into the river, since there was a firm belief that a whale would drive away the salmon. Accordingly, he beached the carcass in the fiord and there dried the meat in smoke.

Smaoan now determined to give an elaborate potlatch at which he planned to portray his prerogative with regard to the whale. He decided to build his new house of the semi-subterranean type; when it was finished he had the design of a whale painted on the back wall. He invited guests from all parts of the coast, and validated, by valuable presents to them, a new name which he had chosen for himself, *Nusāpāniā'sta*, "The Place for Catching Salmon." This name was applicable because his house was built on the west bank of the Kimsquit River at a good place for catching salmon.

Smaoan next went to the land of the *Xụpais* Indians, a branch of the Carriers living northeast of Kimsquit, where he married *Wat·as*, the daughter of a chief. From her he received the right to use a form of *susaok* whistle that imitated the voice of a deer.[illegible] Soon after his return with his bride, *Smaoan* called guests from far and near to another potlâtch, at which he validated the name *uxllikmasaix*, "The Circuit." He chose this with reference to his first travels when seeking a suitable place to settle. He used his own discretion in selecting the name.

About this time *Smaoan* married yet another woman, daughter of a Dean River chief. These marriages so increased his wealth and fame that he was able to give numerous potlatches and validate several names which he chose for himself from incidents that had happened to him since reaching this world. Among these designations were:

Sunxālotla: a *susaok* name meaning "Sun." He chose this in consequence of his transformation to the sun when first travelling around the world. At one potlatch he performed a *susaok* dance with respect to this name.

uxpālxotsaix: a chief's name which he took when he gave away valuable presents. It means "The Going Around," and refers again to his circuit of the world.

Ponpollotsdimut: a chief's name of which the significance has long been forgotten.

Alqonnkam: a chief's name which he validated by valuable presents. It means "The Shelterer," a reference to the manner in which he sheltered his raven brother beneath his eagle wings when he first came to earth.

Omqomkilika, who lacked his brother's power and ability, was able to marry one wife only, *Snulkānāls*, the sister of *Noākila*. Ever since that time there have been intermarriages between the people of the Kimsquit [582] and the Dean rivers, as if this first marriage had "Opened the Way."

After some time, though whether before or after his fourth marriage is not known, *Sximāna* bore *Smaoan* a son, and within a few years he had a large family. Owing to his great wealth he was able to give numerous

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[illegible] It was impossible to learn details of this whistle, since the man who was recounting this myth had never used it himself, and consequently was unwilling to tell the facts.

539 [551] potlatches,[34] at which he validated names for his children. One of these was *Äs·yänam*, the designation he had applied to his salmon-weir; it has been used by his descendants as a child's name ever since. As time went on, when his children grew into manhood, he obtained for them seats in the house and also procured wives for them. His eldest son, whose mother was *Sximäna*, had the names *Łäloxmän·a*, the meaning of which is unknown, and *Äluskmän·ais*, "The Most Important of All Chiefs' Sons." *Smaoan* had arranged marriages for this young man with four women, but *Łäloxmän·a* was so ugly that only one of his wives, as ugly as himself, would have anything to do with him. His only real friend was a younger brother, *Älkexa*, aged about twelve years, who was his constant companion.

One day *Łäloxmän·a* became so embittered and disgusted at his own ugliness that he went away, determined never to return, and not caring whither he went. As provisions he carried only a goat bladder filled with goat marrow. This prevents hunger and is said never to become exhausted, no matter how long the hunter may be absent. *Älkexa* saw his elder brother depart, and decided to accompany him. *Łäloxmän·a* allowed him to come with him for about ten miles, up the valley of the Kimsquit River, where he shot some mergansers which he asked *Älkexa* to take back as a present to his parents. The younger boy was unwilling, nor could he be dissuaded from following, even when *Łäloxmän·a* told him he was going off to die.

So the two camped for the night, and next morning continued their journey up the valley of the Kimsquit River, a region then unknown. *Łäloxmän·a* was very sad at the thought of the hardships which his younger brother would have to endure, but he could see no way in which to persuade him to return. On and on they pressed, camping at night, their only food being the goat marrow which *Łäloxmän·a* carried. Far up the river they followed an affluent from the left, and from its valley climbed the bare mountain which, though they knew it not, is the watershed between the Kimsquit and Kitlobe rivers. Here, above the treeline, they met a wolf. It lowered its ears, hummed, walked a few paces along a path, stopped, and looked back, as if it wished to guide the two wanderers. They decided to follow the animal which, once assured that

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[811] [34] Although the Bella Coola are sufficiently logical to demand an explanation for everything, once a belief has been formulated they cease to inquire whether it is possible. Thus, in all these accounts of the first people, the reader wonders how there were enough people in the world so soon after its settlement to make potlatches possible. Who were the musicians? Who formed the bulk of the guests? Such questions do not strike the Bella Coola as obvious; the stories have been handed down as facts, and they believe that anything was possible in those early days before man had lost his supernatural power.

the two were actually following, led them down an animal trail on the farther side of the mountain. After a while they saw some gulls, a cheering sight since it presaged a river. On and on they went, until at dusk they came to a stream, the headwaters of the Kitlobe River, though of this they were ignorant. Here they met *Sä·lma.*

"Where are you going?" the supernatural one asked. "I can see by your faces that you are melancholy."

Łäloxmän·a told him all his woes, how his wives had deserted him on account of his ugliness, and how accordingly he had wandered away, careless of his fate. *Sä·lma* inserted his fingers in *Łäloxmän·a*'s mouth and the latter vomited. *Sä·lma* examined the vomit and found some of the water in which dry dog salmon had been soaked.

"That is why your wives left you," he said. "It is filthy stuff, no wonder they would not let you come close to them. But I will beautify you."

Sä·lma first massaged *Łäloxmän·a*'s face, until it was very comely. Then the supernatural one rubbed his whole body so that, when he had finished, the ugly youth had been changed to a handsome one. Finally *Łäloxmän·a* passed between *Sä·lma*'s legs, went around his body, sunwise, and again passed between his legs. He did this four times, thereby becoming a shaman, and *Sä·lma* gave him his own stick, which had the power of life and death.

"Now," said *Sä·lma*, "I know that you have been married to four women, but that only one of them has been faithful to you. When you return home, handsome as you are, your wives will all ask you to take them back, but you must cherish only the ugly one, who was faithful to you when you were repulsive. You will be able to make her beautiful, even as you yourself are."

When he had said this, *Sä·lma* vanished.

Still guided by the wolf, the two brothers continued their journey and at evening reached the district on the Kitlobe River known as *Tniqo*. Here they spent the night in a large cave. In the morning the trail was so bad that *Älkexa* decided to go no farther. *Łäloxmän·a* divided his goat marrow with him and told his brother he would not be long absent. On he went, confident that he would soon come to a settlement because *Sä·lma* had told him there was one on the river. Presently he saw trees that had been felled by axes, then smoke, and finally a village on the opposite bank of the river. Here the wolf left him.

Łäloxmän·a had carried with him on his travels a bear-skin blanket and some eagle down. He put these on, and went to a spot immediately opposite the village. Some children were the first to notice him, and they ran home saying that they had seen a supernatural being; this was

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because *Łāloxmān·a* was so beautiful. The Kitlobe chief, *Kapsālopst*, also called *Yəlsqwikaiya*, bade some of his people ferry the new-comer across the river, and when this was done, he welcomed *Łāloxmān·a* to his house. All the people gathered to see the stranger guest; it was the first time that the people of Kimsquit and Kitlobe knew of each other. Owing to his supernatural power, *Łāloxmān·a* was able to talk to them, and when he mentioned his father's name, *Smaoan*, they all knew of him, for his fame had travelled even to that distant spot.[44] *Kapsālopst* asked him whether he wished a wife, and when *Łāloxmān·a* answered in the affirmative, he allowed him to marry his daughter *Wisamkilak*, known also as *Xwisamkila*.

For two years *Łāloxmān·a* dwelt in Kitlobe, until he spoke the language perfectly and was regarded as one of themselves. He had two children, the eldest a boy, *Q̣aiyu*, and the younger a girl, *Wanql*. At this time he thought of *Älkexa*, waiting in the cave on the upper waters of the river which he now knew was the *T̓si·dis*, Kitlobe, and of his parents who must long ago have abandoned all hope for their missing sons. He told his friends that he wished to return, and told them of his brother. A number of his friends volunteered to go with him, so when *Łāloxmān·a* set out he was accompanied not only by his wife, his children, and four slaves belonging to his father-in-law, but also by a large number of young Kitlobe men, carrying olachen grease, for which Kitlobe is famous, as a present to *Smaoan*. Knowing the route, they reached the cave within a single day. But instead of finding *Älkexa*, all that was there were his bones, scattered by animals. At this his Kitlobe friends lamented, but *Łāloxmān·a*, unperturbed, collected the bones and laid on them the stick he had received from *Sā·lma*. Instantly *Älkexa* was restored to life, and he rubbed his eyes as if awakening from a heavy sleep. The socket joint from one hip had been carried away by some animal, so that when he arose he was lame. That is why so many Kitlobe Indians are lame, even to the present day, in spite of the fact that *Älkexa* himself never visited Kitlobe. The restored youth was very weak from death, so for two days the whole party tarried at the cave, administering strengthening food to him. To pass the time *Łāloxmān·a* executed some wonderful paintings on the wall, which remain to the present day, as if petrified. When *Älkexa* was well enough to travel, *Łāloxmān·a* massaged him to give him beauty equal to his own, and then the whole party continued on their way.

Meanwhile, in Kimsquit, *Smaoan* and *Sximāna* had long despaired of ever again seeing their sons, and a mourning ceremony was taking place.

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[44] The myth does not explain how the Kitlobe people had heard of *Smaoan* if this was the first they had heard of Kimsquit.

At this juncture someone saw a party of strangers, and wondered who 539* they might be as they entered the town. There was great rejoicing when the two brothers told their parents who they were, for they had been so transformed that they were unrecognizable. As *Sā·lma* had said, *Łāloxmān·a*'s three beautiful wives came rushing up, eager to have him take them back, but he paid no attention to them. He welcomed only the ugly one, who had mourned for him, and massaged her until she became the most lovely of all.

Smaoan, delighted at the safe return of his sons, and proud of *Łāloxmān·a*'s beautiful children, sent invitations far and near to a great potlatch. At this ceremony he validated, with many presents, a seat in the house for *Łāloxmān·a*. The name thus confirmed was *Spātcaldlt*, "The First Born," a name given to *Łāloxmān·a* by *Kapsālopst*. *Smaoan* also took this opportunity to confer names on his numerous grandchildren. After sojourning for some time in Kimsquit, the Kitlobe people returned home, richly laden with gifts.

In the course of time *Wisamkilak* bore her husband two more children. *Smaoan* continued to prosper and to give potlatches, at one of which he gave one of his grandchildren the name *Stālımx*, "Chief." This designation at once became honourable on account of the goods expended. *Łāloxmān·a* did not wish to forget his Kitlobe friends, so in time he sent two of his children to live there. One of them was *Stālımx*, a name that has ever since remained there. Thus friendly relations between Kimsquit [648] and Kitlobe, first opened by *Łāloxmān·a*, have been maintained. There [582] have been many marriages between people of these two areas, each knows of *Łāloxmān·a*, and it was only about one hundred and fifty years ago that a Kimsquit woman, *Ätsq̓utl* by name, was married to a Kitlobe man to repay the original marriage of *Wisamkilak*.

When *Smaoan* became old he gave yet another potlatch at which he took for himself the name *Łilixunimut*, "The Scatterer." He created this from his own fertile imagination, with reference to the way in which he scattered eagle down when first travelling to the north in eagle form. [551] It has since been used by his descendants when old.

The descendants of *Smaoan* enjoy not only the prerogative of using 539* this myth and the names included in it, but other privileges connected 424 with it. If one of them gives a potlatch he carves the form of a *mātsqus* on the spoons to be used at it, and paints the wall of his house with a whale [532] design. *Omqomkilska*'s descendants are more likely than others to receive supernatural good fortune from a *mātsqus*. The descendants of both

* 539 brothers have the right, moreover, to hunt and collect food in the places used by these first ancestors. The areas so authorized are:
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Ȧlwalsqȧmas: the mountain where they first came to earth.

Okqomȧs: a valley leading into the main valley of the Kimsquit River where *Omqomkilka* was accustomed to hunt.

Nulyȧ-kil: a valley where *Smaoan*'s wives used to pick berries.

Iqwank: a level tract of country on the bank of the Kimsquit River twenty-eight miles from its mouth. No people landed here and *Smaoan* pre-empted it as a hunting-ground.

Nuipa-kul: another valley where *Smaoan*'s wives used to pick berries.

The place in the Kimsquit River where their salmon-weir was erected, and the spot where they caught olachen.

538
115 The length and wealth of detail embodied in this myth raises the question of whether it is one of the usual type, or represents a combination of several stories strung together and related by a man eager to glorify the traditions of his own ancestors. It was received from Jim Pollard, a Kimsquit Indian, descended from *Smaoan*, and himself the user of this name, a valuable and reliable informant. Jim is a man of great ability, who has given more potlatches than any other Indian of either Bella Coola or Kimsquit, and who, accordingly, has been able to validate very fully his ancestral myths and the names embodied therein. Owing to the deaths of his relatives, Jim has been able to use designations and portions of this legend which otherwise would certainly have belonged to other people. In this respect it, therefore, represents an amalgamation, but one of a legitimate nature. Theoretically, every myth would be complete if it were not for the parts possessed by others, and the aim of every wise Bella Coola is to seek the return of these pieces by judicious marriage. Jim has been able to achieve this by the death of his relatives and the assistance of his wife, herself a descendant of *Smaoan*. Before the coming of the white man and the consequent dwindling of population, it is unlikely that any one person would have the duly validated right to tell a myth of this length, but theoretically it was possible, and might have been done by anyone as superior to his fellows as this man is to the present inhabitants of Kimsquit.
[424]
[581]

ORIGIN MYTH OF *Nuxwulst*[60]

* 539 Among the first people dispatched to this earth were four brothers, *Hamot*, *Watlus*, *Ȧlkena*, and *Ȧlkaiālis*, who came as eagles and settled in *Nuxwulst*, the site of the present Manitou Cannery, Kimsquit. Before

leaving *Nusmāt·a*, *Hamcu* had asked *Ālquntām* what they should do for a place to live and the deity had promised to provide them with one. The first night the brothers slept in the open, but the next morning they found a house completed for them on the shore of the fiord; it was of the semi-subterranean type with a central pit for the fire, surrounded by stagings. *Ālquntām* had made it peculiar in several respects. When the tide rose, water was forced up through passages in the rock so that it burst within the dwelling in miniature waterspouts. The upright posts were carved in representations of Thunder, and the paintings on the back-wall were of *Snumq*. Echo was there, invisible as usual, but repeating everyone's speech, while around the floor ran countless mice. The name of the house was *Nunuḷomāls*, "Where Water Enters." 539* [776]

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[60] Related by Jim Pollard.

After a time, when the people had increased on the earth, *Hamcu* invited the chiefs, there were none other then, for a potlatch. The guests saw the wonders of the house and marvelled.

Three times *Hamcu* did this, but when he, or a descendant, attempted to do so for the fourth time, the supernatural power which had been present at the first potlatch had vanished; so carpenters were called upon to reproduce the original features. The painting of *Snumq* and the carving of Thunder presented no difficulties, though the latter was transferred from the house to the totem-pole without. Masks were made to represent the spouting water and manufactured mice ran on the floor by means of hidden strings. Whenever one of *Hamcu*'s descendants gives a potlatch the carpenters are called upon to make realistic replicas, a form of dramatization responsible for features of potlatches not only among the Bella Coola but also, it is said, of the Bella Bella, Kitlobe, and the Tsimshian peoples. [532] [171]

ORIGIN MYTH OF AN UNIDENTIFIED TOWN[37]

In the beginning of time the supreme god sent down two brothers, *Watlus* and *Kwatlwaila*, to Mount *Wa·pat*, some thirty miles up the Bella Coola River not far from *Stuie*. They looked around, not knowing which way to go or what to do. Glancing down they saw smoke arising; it was from *Ālkwal*'s fire, but this they did not know, because there were few people in the land, and no one knew anything about his neighbours. *Kwatlwaila* travelled a short distance upstream until he heard the sound of beating, which puzzled him, so he advanced slowly until he saw a house, to the roof of which he cautiously climbed and looked down inside. Many people had assembled there; they were land-otters giving a dance,

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[37] Related by Jacko, an old man suffering from senile decay. It is unquestionably a fragment of a longer myth.

* 539 aided by alder sticks which beat time of their own accord. From this sight *Kwatlwaslsa* became a shaman and used what he had seen when he was giving a dance of his own. His brother *Waākus* went downstream until he came to a large house at *Kākatlia*[illegible] outside of which stood a huge bull-head. No one was in this house and *Waākus* took possession of it.

A FRAGMENTARY ORIGIN MYTH[illegible]

Long ago at the time the world was first populated there were no rivers apparent, for such were confined underground in a cavern-like prison called *Nusmātllixwais*, the approach to which was barred by a huge boulder. Not only were the rivers shut up, but with them were their occupants, including the salmon. First Eagle tried to break this barrier, but without avail; then Raven succeeded. Since then the Bella Coola River has flowed in its present course. But the *Tcawat* River was still in bondage, to the disgust of the olachen who wished to travel up it to the home of the chief, *Qwamaxa'lts*. The Carpenter, *ālālulāk*, took pity on them and by breaking the barrier permitted them to reach their destination.

ORIGIN MYTHS OF OTHER TRIBES

177 538 [424] As has been repeatedly stated, the Bella Coola have obtained many prerogatives by marriages with the members of neighbouring tribes. Among these are, according to their belief, myths dealing with the peopling of distant localities. Ceremonially and sociologically, such traditions have the same importance as myths that describe Bella Coola as the final place of settlement of the first inhabitants. Accordingly, they can be given at this point.

177 538 174 114 In the previous section the original landing-places of some of the individuals described is said to have been outside the Bella Coola valley. Boas, discussing this fact (p. 122), suggests that such myths may reflect the movements of the ancestors of the Bella Coola from the parent Salish stock. Though this is a plausible hypothesis, it is also possible that

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[illegible] This place could not be identified.

[illegible] Related by Lame Charlie.

a foreign myth, obtained by marriage, might have been altered 177
in the course of generations to the Bella Coola pattern, pre- 538
serving as the only foreign element that of settlement at a 174
distance at the beginning of time. 114

ORIGIN MYTH OF *Owikī*[illegible]

539*

In the beginning of time *Ālquntām* decreed that four brothers should be sent down to this earth. The eldest, whose name was *Ālkālis*, gazed down from a hole in *Nusmāta* and told his younger brothers to wait while he went ahead to reconnoitre. He took the form of a wolf and, as soon as he had reached the earth, went far to the east, where he obtained some abalone-shells. Then he returned to *Ālquntām*'s house, left his spoil with his brothers, and again went off alone to the west. This time he brought back some copper. After this he was ready to settle, so the four assumed the form of wolves and went down to Calvert Island, *Owikī*, as the Bella Bella call it. Here they assumed human form and their wolf cloaks floated back aloft.

Ālquntām did not give them food to carry with them, but he told them they would find sea-lions waiting to be killed on Sea-lion Island. Accordingly they hunted on that island, as their descendants, the people of *Owikī*, have done to this day.

Ālquntām had given *Ālkālis* a box containing some of the cone-shaped whistles used in *sisauk* dances. The three elder brothers decided that they alone should perform the *sisauk* ceremonial and that, accordingly, the youngest should be kept in ignorance of the contents of the box, as uninitiated people are at the present time. He was a mere boy and his older brothers used to leave him at home when they went hunting, but they had given him the most explicit instructions not to open the carefully roped box, containing their treasures.

All went well for some time, but finally the boy yielded to temptation and opened the box. His brothers returned unexpectedly, and found him examining the whistles, with his head almost out of sight within. They decided to kill him at once. They crawled up, closed the cover on his head, and sat on the box until life was extinct. Then they laid the body on the ground before them as they sat behind the fire, and sent one of their number out to gather three small pliant sticks. When this was done they covered the corpse with eagle down and sat on the ground around it, raising and lowering the sticks as if they were throwing objects into the

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[illegible] Related by Joshua Moody.

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948

NE5 Bellacoola NE5

Bellabella NE5

BC
* 539

air. As they did so the feathers began to move, gradually rising in the air until some passed through the roof. It was as if a miniature whirlwind of gentle power were agitating them. As the three continued to use the sticks, the corpse itself began to move, finally disintegrating into the down and passing through the roof. As it did so the three said:

"Go back whence we came. Yo . . . . . ."

Since that time the people of *Owiki* have disposed of their dead in this manner.

The first *Aλaiatis* brought with him from above not only the right to a *sisauk* dance, but also a Cannibal *kusiut* dance (II, p. 71) with the Bella Bella name *Lobwas*. He had, moreover, the rare privilege of performing *kusiut* and *sisauk* rites on alternate nights.

BC
[766]
[177]
[424]

This myth is important since it embodies an account of the disappearance of a corpse through a roof, a method of removal of the dead now practised by the Bella Coola in the case of chiefs. This means is recognized by the Bella Coola to have been a recent introduction from either Bella Bella or Rivers Inlet to *Tal'io*, and thence to Bella Coola. Judging from this account, it would appear that such a method of removal of a corpse must be considered as originally a prerogative embodied in a myth, although it has ceased to be regarded as such in Bella Coola. The man from whom this tradition was obtained said it was only one of the type current in Bella Coola, though such are common in Bella Bella. It was obtained by the marriage of one of his ancestors to a woman of *Owiki*, and was used as theme for a mourning ceremony at the death of his sister.

BC
[177]
[583]

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BC
* 539

AN EARLY BELLA BELLA MYTH TRANSMITTED BY MARRIAGE TO BELLA COOLA*

In the beginning of time, when the population of the earth consisted only of the few people who had come down from above, *Yalitimat* went to the Bella Bella town, *Qaqaiol*, where, as was common at that period, people had no houses but were sheltered under huge trees which *Alquntam* had placed there for that purpose. *Yalitimat* was in the form of a man at the time and fell in love with a girl of the village. Her father, *Nâ'ai*, agreed to the match and the two were married. The husband never slept with his wife; when he wished children, he willed that they

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*Related by Joshua Moody.

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948

NES Bellacoola NES

Bellabella NES

BB 539 BC 539*

should be born, and in time the couple had a large family. *Yalátimot* made many things for his father-in-law, who had descended from above ill-equipped with the necessities of life. *Nū·ai* asked his son-in-law for a canoe, and the carpenter agreed to make him a supernatural one by means of his great power. He built a large and strong craft that had the power of transforming itself into a salmon; when such a change was desired a salmon's back grew over the canoe.

Yalátimot had brought with him from above the ability to make models of creatures living in *Nusmát·a* and to animate them on this earth. The salmon canoe was an [illegible], the supernatural name of the *sisiutł*,* which latter designation was created by *Yalátimot* himself on earth. In his Bella Bella house there were wonderful carvings; beams, rafters, door-posts, dishes, all were elaborately decorated.** *Yalátimot* also made the totems. The construction of these, and of so many beams that they formed a house, became the theme of a *Nusqalst* [illegible] myth, recently changed to a *kusiut* rite. The Bella Bella have derived their great skill in carpentry from *Yalátimot's* residence among them at the beginning of time.

Yalátimot's father-in-law explained that he wanted a canoe in order to roam the world to see whether or not other people lived in it. If it were so, he proposed to study their customs and to transmit any of value to his numerous descendants. The canoe had the power of travelling in a straight line; if a mountain blocked its passage it tunnelled a way through, causing landslides. *Nū·ai* first travelled south. Whenever his canoe reached a village the inhabitants used to rush out to see it, but it would blink its *sisiutł* eyes, which changed colour; whereat the earth would shake and the observers fall dead. This method of killing is *[illegible]*, which is consequently one of the *sisiutł's* names in the land above. Finally *Nū·ai* reached the far south where *Kāmai·ts* had fled after abandoning Restoration Bay (I, p. 41), owing to the numerous footsteps she had found in that area. When the canoe came to the beach near the woman's house it blinked and the world reeled. *Kāmai·ts* emerged from her house, gazed everywhere but at the canoe, and then began to stagger. Summoning all her reserves of power she cast them at the interloper, but the canoe merely raised its back and became a salmon. *Nū·ai* projected his force against her, and she fell to the earth, overcome, crying out:

"*Nū·ai*, *Nū·ai*, stop, come ashore."

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*A supernatural double-headed salmon or snake (I, p. 570).

**This building is said to have fallen down a comparatively short time ago, after standing for an extremely long period.

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534
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As soon as the salmon had taken on the form of a canoe again, *Nā·ai* went ashore and entered the woman's home.

She said, "I dwell in the ultimate south, beyond me there is nothing; I have some of the things which you seek except one, a life-box, containing liquid.[a] Who made your canoe?"

He told her and she said, "I know *Yalātimot*, he is the greatest carpenter of all, the only one able to make such a craft as yours. But he has made it too strong and thereby killed all the people from whom you desired to learn useful arts. Take this life-box and return to the last village you visited. Dip your finger in the liquid and put it in each ear and nostril of those whom you have slain, and it will revive them."

Nā·ai carried out all her instructions at the next village and was able to restore all to life. In gratitude they gave him samples of their work and taught him all that he wanted to know. Then he retraced his route, stopping at each town, resuscitating the dead and learning their handicrafts, specimens of which he collected for the benefit of the Bella Bella. Finally he returned to his own village where he stored all his acquisitions in his own house, leaving the life-box, alone, in his canoe.

His next journey was to the east. As before, his canoe passed through every obstacle and he killed all the people in the villages which he visited. In the ultimate east he found a town where abalone-shells were used for everything; he killed the inhabitants, then revived them, and was given a supply of the shells. Then he repeated what he had done on his southern trip, returning to his starting-point and reviving his other victims, from whom he collected specimens of their handiwork and information as to their manufacture. He stored his samples in his house again and set out for the west, as before carrying only his life-box with him. Again he slew all whom he saw *en route*, until he reached the ultimate west where he found a village against which his canoe was powerless, because the houses, streets, and people were of copper.

Nā·ai said, "I shall take for myself the name *Kiāk*ämot*," which means copper in the Bella Bella language.

While returning to Bella Bella he restored his victims to life, and received what he wanted from them. His next expedition was to the north, where, after laying low the inhabitants of the villages through which he passed, he eventually reached one where people and houses were of *taisaimq*, a kind of copper. Here again his salmon-canoe was powerless. From this village he turned homewards, collecting information and reviving those he had killed as he went. This was his last expedition. When he returned to Bella Bella, *Yalātimot* told him not to use the canoe any more, and it moved away without human guidance in the shape of a

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[a] It was her chamber-pot filled with her own urine.

1;McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948

~~NE6 Bellacoola NE6~~

Bellabella NE5

BB 539 BC 539 *

salmon. It ranged over the world and in places dropped scales, which became *susiutl.* This is why they are found in the mountains.

Not long after *Yulätimot* said to his father-in-law:

"Our family has all that it requires. My children, your descendants through your daughter, are supplied with all they need, so I am going back to *Nusmät·a.*"

Then he returned above, whence he had come.

FRAGMENTARY MYTH OF A BELLA BELLA TOWN*

In the beginning the supreme god sent down as a grizzly bear a chief, *uläthmiq*, whose name means "Different from All Others." He wanted to travel to the south-west, but *Masmasalānix* persuaded him to go north, to the land of copper. In that far country he found a woman, *Tsomlaks*, who wished to go to Bella Coola, so *uläthmiq* took her in his canoe. Several times on the return journey she wanted to leave him, but he prevailed on her to stay. They met *Nutkila* with whom they travelled to Bella Bella. When they came to the bad whirlpool at Moustache Nose, *uläthmiq* decided to slay it; so he plunged down into the sea, but was caught by a devil-fish and apparently killed. *Tsomlaks* continued her journey and built a house at *Ḳwaml*, near the Bella Bella lighthouse. That night an owl came near:

"I am *uläthmiq*," it hooted.

Tsomlaks accordingly summoned all the Bella Bella chiefs and they prepared to mourn his death, but instead *uläthmiq* himself came up from the sea to their ceremonial as a grizzly bear and killed many of them.

THE HOME OF THE DOGS

BC 539 *

In the beginning of time, when the earth was first being populated by *Ālquntäm*, he sent down not only men, but animals as well. Among the latter were dogs, who came with their chief *Spiyatäx·a* and settled opposite Johnny Bay, near Ocean Falls. This place has since been called *Ăpt·i nao Wamalsaks*, "The Place Inhabited by Dogs." Here they multiplied rapidly, in spite of their continual quarrelling and fighting. The *uläny* people living in the vicinity decided that it would be a great mistake to allow the dogs to increase out of all reason; so they banded together, attacked the town, and killed off its inhabitants. They pulled out the intestines of the slain dogs and threw them on the rocks, where they remain to this day, graved in the stone.

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*Related by Jim Pollard.

McIlwraith [illegible] (1922-1924) 1948
[illegible] Bellacoola [illegible]

Bellabella NES

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* 534
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[534]

FRAGMENT OF A KWATNA ORIGIN MYTH

In the beginning *Alquntam* sent down to [illegible], a point west of Kwatna, two men with their respective wives. The men's names were [illegible] and [illegible], and those of the women, [illegible] and [illegible].

ORIGIN MYTH OF SCHOONER PASS

In the beginning there came down to [illegible], on Schooner Pass, a woman whose name was [illegible]. On the shore of a lake near there she became a shaman, through a vision of which the details are lost. To obtain the continued goodwill of the power residing in the lake [illegible] was wont to throw upon the water eagle down and [illegible] cedar-bark, and used this water when treating patients. One day when she was singing, she was overheard by [illegible], [illegible], [illegible], [illegible], [illegible], and [illegible], who had come to earth at the Nass River, [illegible], and were travelling by canoe, looking for a suitable place to settle. The four first named were brothers, the remaining two their sisters. Attracted by the song the six landed and ultimately chose [illegible] as their abode, where they lived amicably with the powerful [illegible]. In this they were fortunate, for she was so magically endowed that she had success in whatever she undertook.

[illegible] and his brothers built a huge house of the [illegible] which grew abundantly in the vicinity. In course of time they were able to call people from far and near for a potlatch, at which a whale [illegible] down through the smoke vent on to the central fire causing it to blaze brightly, much to the amazement of the guests.

B.C.
[424]
[556]

Since that time, whenever the owner of the name [illegible] has given a potlatch, carpenters have prepared for him a wooden whale which [illegible] on to the fire, a jealously preserved prerogative.

ORIGIN MYTH OF [illegible]

In the beginning, *Alquntam* sent down [illegible] with a herald to [illegible], near a lake in the country now occupied by the Carrier Indians. [illegible] brought with him a sack containing the model of a house which, when he set it on the ground, expanded without visible cause into a fine, large dwelling. In front of it there was a towering totem-pole surmounted by an owl.

Related by [illegible].
Related by [illegible].
Related by Mrs. Willie Mack.

[illegible] McIlwraith B-3 (1922-1924)1948

NE5 Bellacoola NE5

Bellabella NE5

When [illegible] had prospered and collected a great deal of goods he sent his herald in all directions with invitations to a potlatch. There were not many people living in those early days, so the guests were few in number. As each group approached, the owl turned its head, without moving its body, to inform [illegible] that strangers were coming, and who they were.[illegible]

ORIGIN MYTH OF [illegible][illegible]

One of the first people to come to this earth was a man who settled on Dean Channel below Kimsquit, the country of the [illegible] people. He lived there for a considerable period and became the father of many children, among them a son named [illegible]. He was a source of constant worry to his father, who wished him to become a hunter. He made him a bow and arrow, but [illegible] lost the arrow the day it was given to him, and then the one his father gave him to replace it. For some time his parent made an arrow every day, and every day the son lost it. This carelessness so annoyed the father, who was also irritated at [illegible] for quarrelling with his brothers, that he decided to move away from the settlement, and leave his troublesome son there alone. With the help of his other children, he took down the side boards of the house, leaving only the frame standing, and put some glowing embers in a clam shell for the benefit of [illegible]; then all went away in their canoes.

Not long after the departure of his relatives [illegible] saw a mountain goat on a slide above him. He had only one arrow, but decided to try to kill the animal. As he climbed after the goat, it moved down the mountain to meet him and presently he saw there was a man behind it; the latter was a supernatural being. [illegible] hid until he could learn what the visitation meant; when the supernatural being drew near, he asked him.

"I have come to see you," the latter replied, "I bring you this stick," indicating one which he was carrying. "When you want to kill mountain goats hold it in your hand and make the motion of throwing it; a mountain goat will fall dead. Also grasp it when you pray to [illegible], asking him for whatever you desire, physical strength, success in your undertakings, or anything else. You must be generous and give away the riches which this stick will bring to you."

Then the being gave him the stick and vanished. [illegible] went a little distance down the mountain, made the motion of casting the stick

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[illegible] [illegible]'s father never took the name [illegible], and hence never used this mask. Had he done so he would have built for himself a house such as the first [illegible] had, with an owl at the top of the totem-pole.

[illegible] [illegible] by Jim [illegible].

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531
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531

three times, and three mountain goats appeared, dead, on the ground before him. He took the fat from the stomach of a yearling and carried it to his father, who had settled some distance away, as proof that he had had success in his hunting; then returned to the place where he had been abandoned.

Next morning, stick in hand, he went to the edge of the forest where he stood looking away from the site of the settlement, as the supernatural being had instructed him, and prayed to [illegible] for houses. After praying he looked around and found four large buildings standing on the spot; on the first sat an eagle, on the second a kingfisher, on the third a gull, and on the fourth an owl. The eagle screamed, as eagles are accustomed to do in the early morning, and at once the house on which it sat was filled with all manner of goods, including boxes containing the large cone-shaped whistles such as are used for [illegible] ceremonials. During the day the kingfisher rattled, the gull called, the owl hooted; and as each uttered its cry the house on which it sat was filled with all kinds of goods, foods, skins, blankets, and household utensils. With the wealth so acquired *[illegible]* gave a potlatch to which he summoned the people from far and near. The whistles sounded, imitating the voices of the four birds which had sat on the dwellings and through the cries of which they had been filled. The Bella Bella chief, *[illegible]*, covered his head with his blanket because he had nothing to equal the display, so *[illegible]* gave him a whistle with its box. All the guests were witnesses of the transaction, and it was in this way that the [illegible] ceremonial reached Bella Bella.

[illegible] lived to a great age, and during his lifetime moved to several places, in each of which he gave potlatches. His last stopping-place was *[illegible]*, where he held his largest rite, erecting for the purpose a new house with six tiers of seats to hold the audience. It was there that he died.

BC
[illegible]

Whenever a descendant of *[illegible]* gives a potlatch he erects outside his house a totem-pole on which are the four birds that brought good fortune to his ancestor.

AN ORIGIN MYTH OF [illegible][1]

In the beginning four brothers, *[illegible]*, *[illegible]*, *[illegible]*, *[illegible]*, and their sister *[illegible]*, came to earth at [illegible] Island, *[illegible]*, to the west of [illegible]. They moved to *[illegible]*, but often returned to their landing-place to hunt sea-lions which they would club to death. [illegible] was the most prosperous of the brothers; so much had his wealth increased that he was able to call the people from all parts of the coast to a potlatch. Bc 536*

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[1] [illegible] by [illegible].

Alquntam had given [illegible] the honourable prerogative or duty of singing the mourning song whenever anyone died. When it was time for her to function she painted her face with a design representing a rough sea, and beat time on the floor with a stick, [illegible], on which were jingling copper bangles. The theme was how Raven had brought her help on all occasions. BB 536

The right to sing this song has since been preserved as a prerogative in the ancestral family descended from these four brothers. No name accompanies it, but the right must be validated by the giving of presents. Bc [424] [538]

EARLY TRADITIONS HAVING THE CEREMONIAL SIGNIFICANCE OF ORIGIN MYTHS

The following are examples of myths which are used as authorization for potlatches even though they do not deal with the actual peopling of this earth. It will be noted that they describe the adventures of early settlers, and only with non-Bella Coola. All are claimed to have been obtained by intermarriage with the descendants of individuals mentioned in them. Bc 537* Bc [77]

AN EARLY FISHING MYTH*

Not long after the first people had come to this earth, Raven taught an ordinary chief, [illegible] by name, how to catch black cod with hook and line. It was summer at the time, and [illegible] began to make preparations for fishing early the following year. He instructed his wife to take three female assistants with her to the woods to collect a large quantity of cedar-bark for making the line, which had to be at least three hundred yards in length, owing to the depth at which black cod are found in [illegible] Channel. The four women returned four days later with a large amount of the material, on which they worked all summer and the following winter. Meanwhile [illegible], with three other men to help him, was busy manufacturing hooks of the usual British Columbia type. They were made from the knots of dead and fallen hemlocks, the interior was first cut out, bent into the desired shape, secured with mountain BB 539 Bc 539*

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*Related by Jim Pollard.

McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948

NE6 Bellacoola NE6

Bellabella NE5

BB 539 BC * 539

goat grease, and tied. After a week the lashing was removed and the hooks retained the desired shape. By January all was ready, and the tedious task of fastening them to the line had been completed.

Sx paaxł set out from his home with a number of companions to Labouchere Channel, where they caught for bait a large quantity of the small fish known as sardines, *[illegible]*.[illegible] It was then evening and next morning the fisherman threw out the cod line before eating. *Sx paaxł* had great success, catching over a hundred fish at a single time, owing to the number of hooks on his line. During the winter he lowered his line only once a day, but he fished steadily, drying his spoil at intervals, and when April came and he could make three hauls daily, he had caught an enormous quantity. All who saw his success were amazed, and many copied his method; since that time the use of hook and line for cod has been a common practice.

BC [536]

When Raven taught *Sx paaxł* how to catch cod he also instructed his wife how to clean and prepare them in a certain manner and added that she must throw the entrails back into the ocean. The woman remembered the latter injunction, and her daughter regularly disposed of the remains in this way, but they were careless in the manner of cutting the fish. *Ṣomaqma*, chief of the supernatural beings dwelling beneath the ocean, knew of this and was angry at the insult offered to Black Cod. The underwater beings hunt on behalf of their master, so the latter sent the blackfish with instructions to seize *Sx paaxł*'s daughter, a pretty girl named *Allamba*. This is a Bella Bella word, which probably means "Very Good." The blackfish watched her come to the edge of the sea, waited until she had gone a short distance into the water, and then carried her off. Since she was below the age of puberty the supernatural fish had no qualms in approaching her. To those on shore it appeared as if she had been devoured; in reality the blackfish bore her away to *Ṣomaqma*'s house in their canoe, which, like that of the salmon, is invisible to mortal eyes. She found herself among many strange fish, and in the presence of the mighty *Ṣomaqma*, who wore his usual broad-brimmed hat.

When those who had seen the kidnapping of *Allamba* told *Sx paaxł* and his wife, they grieved for their daughter as for one dead. In mourning, they stopped fishing and tore their hair. From afar Raven saw their grief and came to ask its cause.

"For some unknown reason I have lost my daughter," *Sx paaxł* answered.

"I think it must be due to your having cut up Black Cod in some manner other than that in which I directed you," said Raven. "If you

BC [536]

[illegible] These are commonly used as bait; in fact, *[illegible]* means "bait."

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948

NE6 Bellacoola NE6

Bellabella NE5

BB 539

BC 539*

had followed my instructions this trouble would not have come upon you."

Meanwhile *Q̱omoqwa* had been questioning *Ailsamka*: "Why did you not obey Raven's instructions about cutting up Black Cod? You have been committing a very serious offence, but I shall return you to your parents tomorrow and you can tell them to be more careful in future about teaching people."

The land in which the little girl found herself was much like this earth, containing a river, with the ocean in place of the sky over it. An old woman, *Snulqulyáls·di Q̱omoqwa*, who was living in *Q̱omoqwa*'s house, told *Ailsamka* not to eat any unfamiliar food which her captor-host might offer her, or she would be unable to return; whereas she would be all right if she maintained her customary diet. Presently someone asked her what she would like to eat; she named several of her favourite dishes and they were brought to her without demur. Next morning, it was really next year but she did not know that,* *Q̱omoqwa* prepared to send her back. From the doorway of his house she could see the cod lines hanging down through the water, and *Q̱omoqwa* asked her is she could see her father's.

"No," she replied, "he is not there."

In what seemed a few minutes, but in reality was several months, because *Q̱ə pəank* did not begin his fishing until March, she saw his canoe approaching.

She said to *Q̱omoqwa*, "That is he. I recognise his paddle."

Q̱ə pəank dropped his line, and as he did so began to cry, thinking of his dead daughter. Acting on *Q̱omoqwa*'s instructions, *Ailsamka* grasped the lowest hook, while *Q̱omoqwa* sent a black cod to each of the others. After a while *Q̱ə pəank* recovered from his spasm of grief and hauled up his line, assisted by his two sons who were with him in the canoe. So great was their amazement at seeing *Ailsamka* on the line that they refused to believe their eyes and wanted to throw the line back, but she quickly called out:

"I am your daughter."

The father thankfully drew her into the boat, exclaiming at her long absence; this was the first she knew that she had been away for more than a single night.

Her two brothers called out, "*Q̱ə pəank*'s daughter has returned, haul in your lines."

The news was passed from canoe to canoe, the fishermen drew up their lines and hurried ashore to *Q̱ə pəank*'s house, eager to hear what had happened. Fresh sand was spread on the floor, as is always done when

Bc.

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*One day in the land of supernatural beings is equivalent to a year for mortals.

[972]

I:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948

NE6 Bellacoola NE6

Bellabella NE5

BB 539

a person has been in contact with supernatural beings to enable him to enter.

BC 539

Ailramka told them everything, that her mother had failed to teach her how to cut up black cod, "so Ḳomoqwa sent blackfish to catch me so that I could be taught," she said. "You must be very careful to cut them up properly or trouble will come upon you."

BC BB [226] [825]

The correct method, as taught by Raven, is to split the fish cleanly without severing the bones. *Ḳö pawak*'s daughter had erred by cutting the one which is equivalent in a fish to the human collar-bone. She told them of the fish that abounded in Ḳomoqwa's house; of the red-fish, which disobeyed their mother by playing outside the house so that their stomachs were often forced out from their mouths and they floated up to the surface; of Ḳomoqwa himself and his large hat; and of the other denizens of the underworld. The people listened attentively and ever after cut up black cod in the prescribed fashion, though if *Ailramka* had not been carried off to Ḳomoqwa's house Raven's teaching would undoubtedly have been forgotten.

Not long after his daughter's safe return *Ḳö pawak* gave a potlatch. He took for himself the name Ḳomoqwa, and at the same time reproduced in his own house as much as possible of what his daughter had described. Thus there were imitation fishes, especially the halibut, around the house, while the red-fish were shown as wooden models that could be drawn up to the roof by hidden strings representing the manner in which the fish float up to the surface of the ocean. Ḳomoqwa, himself, was shown wearing his large bell topped hat, of the type known as *hilqal*.

While *Ailramka* was under the water Ḳomoqwa had shown her *nusmk* whistles, and at this potlatch they were used while the girl was concealed within the back-room as a *nusmk* initiate.

BC [177] [556]

This was the origin of the *nusmk* ceremonial, which spread in time from the *aitimg* people to the Bella Coola. The name Ḳomoqwa passed to one of *Ḳö pawak*'s descendants who, when he gave a potlatch, arranged

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BC BB [424] [244] [533]

The red-fish is an unidentified deep-sea fish which dies in shallow water through lack of pressure.

This style was always worn by Ḳomoqwa and *Alquntam* and, as many of the first people obtained their power from one or other of these beings, the prerogative of using such hats at potlatches is quite common. They are made of cedar roots, are waterproof, and are usually painted with one of the wearer's ancestral crests. When either Ḳomoqwa or *Alquntam* is shown on a totem-pole he is displayed with one of these hats.

It will be noted that the narrator tacitly assumes any origin recorded in his myth to be the sole, or authentic one.

I:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948

NE6 Bellacoola NE6

Bellabella NE5

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Bc
[536]
[177]

his house in imitation of *Ǫomoqua's*; since then any possessor of this ancient name has done likewise. From that time *Ǫomoqua* has been a common Bella Bella *totemism*, and is always shown with his huge hat.

The narrator obtained this myth through the marriage of his mother's mother with an *aitlmx* man.

A MYTH OF SEA-LION ISLAND[19]

In the beginning of time the sea-lions came down to earth at an island outside Rivers Inlet where they lived and multiplied. The place is still known as Sea-Lion Island and hunters from all parts of the coast used to go there, as the animals were not only good food but easy to kill.

On one occasion a man had wandered apart from his companions and met a stranger who invited him home. He accepted and followed his host into a nearby house, though he had never known before that there was one in the vicinity. Once within, the door closed with a metallic crash and the rash explorer vanished from the sight of his companions, who thought that he must have been drowned. But he had really entered a sea-lion house. The animals were sitting around their fires exactly as human beings are accustomed to do; in fact, the only strange thing was that they were using human knee-caps as dishes. He listened to their conversation.

"Lend your dish to *Nuqaqa*," he heard one of the animals say to a friend.

Nuqaqa was an old woman who was sitting in one corner of the house.

"The dish will be too small to hold a meal," thought the mortal.

The sea-lions could understand his thoughts.

"Don't say this," said one of them. "*Nuqaqa* has the power of making the food inexhaustible."

Presently one of the beasts gave the man a knee-cap dish containing a minute morsel of halibut soaked in oil.

"That won't be enough for me," he thought.

But again a sea-lion comprehended what was in his mind. It was true. The man ate and ate until he could eat no more, but the amount of food on his plate did not diminish.

He stayed with them for several months, but at last grew homesick and lonely. The sea-lions read his unvoiced desires.

"Your home is not far away," said one of them. "We will send you there whenever you like. You can travel on a wave; would you prefer one that will carry you at one swoop, at two, at three, or at four?"

The man thought of the jolt with which he would strike the beach if

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[19] Related by [illegible].

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948

NE6 Bellacoola NE6

Bella bella NE5

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he travelled the whole distance on a single billow, so asked to be sent on a four-billow wave. His canoe was a sea-lion's stomach, into which he climbed through the mouth and which he made watertight by tying up the entrance with the animal's entrails. Whether or not the creature was alive is not clear, but at any rate the man set off in the strange craft. He felt as if he were on the back of an animal which made long, easy, slow bounds; it was the slow surging of a gigantic Pacific comber. After four bounds he untied the sack and found himself at home.

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Certain names have been preserved from this myth. The name *Nuqaqa* is now used by a dog, as the owner is the last of her family. Another name is *Thenampmiil*, "The Crash," derived from the metallic sound of the closing door of the sea-lion house. The name *Numainie* was also obtained inside the house, but the details of its significance are lost.

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[178]
[424]

AN EARLY MYTH OF *Kalde i**

As has been said, ambitious individuals, especially if they lack origin myths of the customary kind, sometimes claim ordinary stories as such. The following is almost certainly a case in point. It was obtained from an unreliable informant, who claimed it as a family myth, and said he had used it at a potlatch. He asserted that it was a Bella Bella story, transmitted through the marriage of one of his ancestors with a Bella Bella woman. Another informant, well versed in Bella Bella folk-lore, recounted another version of the same myth as a mere tale. There seems little doubt that the first narrator had merely laid claim to a common story to supply the deficiency of a true myth.

In the beginning, there came down to earth at the head of Gas Bay, *Kalde i*, a solitary man whose name was *Kikdo-a*. He was so lonely that he made for himself from soft punky wood a woman, dressed her in blankets and clothing, and gave her the name, *Qwa'lom*, which is in the Bella Bella language. *Kikdo-a* was a great hunter; every day he went out to seek mountain goats, which provided him with great quantities of grease, as well as yarn that he wove into blankets. Before leaving the house he always placed *Qwa'lom* in front of a loom, put food beside her and told her to eat as much as she liked and to work diligently.

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*Related by Kimsquit Jim.

Bellabella NE5

Other people had come down to earth at the same time as *Kásān a*, and among them a man and his wife who had landed at the mouth of Gas Bay. They had two daughters who, walking one day at the head of the bay, were surprised to find a house. They looked in and saw a woman, so entered, and laughed heartily to find her made of rotten wood. They kicked over the figure and the head fell into the fire and was burnt. Then they seated themselves in her place, worked diligently at the blanket and ate a large amount of the food. Towards dusk they put the figure back in place and hid themselves.

BB 539
BC 539 *

Soon *Kásān a* entered. He embraced the figure, called her a good wife, and thanked her for weaving so diligently and for having eaten so much of the food. Then he saw that she had burnt her head, and chided her, saying that she must take better care of herself. At this the two girls who were hiding burst out laughing and showed themselves. They suggested to *Kásān a* that he choose one of them for his wife; he agreed, selected the elder and married her. He built a house on a hilltop where they lived and to which he called people from far and near when he gave a potlatch.

Sisaok Origin Myths

As already stated, many *sisaok* names are believed to have come down from above with the first Bella Coola, or to have been created by them on this earth. In such cases, the *sisaok* origin myth is the same as the ancestral myth. Theoretically, names of the same type can also be received through visions in which a beholder is given his new designation by some supernatural being, or takes it from the apparition. In either case, of course, it must be duly validated by the giving of presents. Only three myths were obtained which deal solely with the acquisition of a *sisaok* prerogative. No doubt this is chiefly to be explained by the fact that most *sisaok* rites have been derived from the Bella Bella.

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THE ORIGIN OF THE *Sisaok* NAME, *[illegible]**

About [illegible], a party of *[illegible]* Indians† spent the winter in Bella Coola. Early in the spring one of them broke his leg so

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*Related by Joshua Moody.

†It was impossible to identify this tribe. According to the Bella Coola they are akin to the Carriers, but have adopted the [illegible]

*539 609 424 that he was unable to return home. A young Bella Coola woman charitably took the injured man into her house, but though she tended him with care, the injury did not heal properly, and he was crippled for life. He used to work around the house at light chores, but was unable to perform any hard work, and was virtually adopted into the family, though, lacking land in Bella Coola, he could never acquire any real status there. After remaining for more than five years the cripple became ill, and realized that he was about to die. In gratitude to the woman who had sheltered him, he asked her to use his *sisauk* name, *Spuxpuxsā-mpdimut*, for one of her children, if she ever had any. Soon afterwards, the stranger died. The woman's family paid for his burial, and it was recognized that the name, with myth attached, belonged to them. In later years it was duly validated with presents at a potlatch, for the benefit of her son from whom this account was obtained.

The myth is as follows:

*539 Long, long ago, a number of the sons of chiefs were playing on the shore of Ootsa Lake, not far from a village. One of them, happening to look upwards, was surprised to see drifting down from a great height a *spuxpux*, one of the long feathers which grow on the upper leg of an eagle. They idly wondered who would get it, and pressed close together, ready to struggle, boy-like, for the prize, but it eluded their upstretched hands, and lit on the head of one of the boys. Then, to the amazement of all, he was lifted from the ground, as if the feather had been a magnet drawing him aloft. One of his friends seized his ankles and tried to pull him down, but in vain; moreover, he found that he could not release his grasp. A third lad grasped the feet of the would-be rescuer, but he, too, was lifted from the ground. One after another tried to pull down his friends, but none could do so, until finally all the lads were drawn aloft by the feather, each holding the legs of the one above him. Nothing was ever heard of their fate.

A few years later the father of the boy on whom the feather had fallen gave a potlatch, at which he used this event as a *sisauk* theme for one of his surviving children. A mask representing the sun was used in the belief that this supernatural being alone could have caused such an event.

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[829] and the *sisauk* ceremonial through intermarriage with the coastal people of the Skeena River. Their home is said to be far to the north of Ootsa Lake, but, as no Bella Coola has visited them, little reliability can be placed on this statement.

The name used for the *sisaok* initiate was *Spuxpuxpā-mpāimut*, with reference to the feather which had carried away his brother. 539*

A *Sinxl Sisaok* MYTH

It is doubtful whether the following tradition is a true *sisaok* myth or merely an explanation for a dramatic performance carried out at potlatches. 539* 575

About 1880 a man of *Sinxl* was made a shaman by the supernatural being *Tlaqmai ks*, a woman who normally lives in the land above. She is made almost entirely of copper so that whenever she walks there is the sound of clashing metal. The visionary was given the shaman's name of *Susnakila*. It was not generally known how he obtained his power, but as his wealth increased in an amazing manner, it was assumed that he must have received something from *Tlaqmai ks* which, kept in his box, acted as a magnet to wealth.[illegible]

Susnakila laid down four laws for behaviour in his house, which were obeyed, since he was a person of influence both as a shaman and as a man of wealth. He said that *Tlaqmai ks* had instructed him in the following:

(1) No brand was to be taken from the central fire, lest the supernatural ones who were watching it should be offended at the removal.

(2) No catamenial woman was to be allowed within the house.

(3) No pounding of cedar-bark was to be allowed within the house.

(4) Since his power was in some manner connected with the fire he decreed that while his songs were being sung, there was to be no obstruction of any kind between the singers and it. Accordingly, they did not arrange themselves in the usual circle, but sat in a row with a sleeping mat stretched between them and the fire, as if it were a connecting causeway.

Whenever *Susnakila* gave a dance, six holes were cut through the wall of the back-room, at a height of about seven feet from the floor. While actually dancing, six assistants puffed eagle down through these holes on to his head, in time to the music. Moreover, instead of standing on the floor, *Susnakila* used to perform within a large box, which concealed him below the thighs and which was moved to and fro by assistants, as if it had been on castors. After dancing in time to two songs, a metallic clashing would be heard without, and *Susnakila* would rush forth, returning with a small, masked girl whose clothing was entirely covered with tiny copper ornaments. She represented *Tlaqmai ks*. *Susnakila*

[illegible] This incident resembles the obtaining of supernatural good fortune; see vol. I, p. [illegible].

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948

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would guide the child to the box, lift her in, then leap in himself and dance vigorously beside her. After a time he carried his assistant to the back room, whence he returned alone to supervise the usual distribution of presents.

A BELLA BELLA *Sisaok* MYTH[30]

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Years ago, when white men first came to the coast, a schooner was surprised and captured by some *utitmy* Indians near whose village it was anchored in Johnston Channel. The crew was massacred with the exception of one man who crawled ashore on a mooring rope; his name was given as *Kämpa*, probably an attempt to pronounce Campbell. For over a year he was hunted by the *utitmy* people without success, and it was assumed that he must have died. Four years later, however, a Bella Bella canoe was cautiously rounding a point when the bow man saw a strange figure collecting clams. He went ashore armed with his musket and stalked the creature, which turned out to be the white man, clad in woven bark and moss. The latter made friendly signals, and the Bella Bella treated him kindly, giving him food and clothing. He remained with them for years and learnt their language. On one occasion when his rescuers' supply of powder was exhausted, this man said that he was going away, and left early one morning at high tide, to return in the afternoon with some powder he had made himself. He refused to share with the Bella Bella his knowledge of how to make it, but kept them well supplied, and also furnished much game. When at length a white man's craft came to Bella Bella the survivor sent a message written in charcoal on cedar wood to the captain, and he was taken off. Presents were given to his rescuers for their kindness in aiding him, as well as a paper setting forth the particulars of their friendliness to the whites.

Many years later the son of *Kämpa's* rescuer made a *sisaok* name, and used a mask representing the white man. The myth used in connection with it told of the manner in which the father of the dancer had found a strange creature who brought him good fortune, first by providing him with powder, and then by bringing him into friendly relations with the white man. The only incorrect part of the rite was the postponement of its inauguration until many years after the event.

If this tale has an historical basis, it must be assumed that the survivor of the massacre had been able to conceal some powder which he claimed to have made in order to increase his reputation.

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[30] Related by Joshua Moody.

CHAPTER VII

BIRTH, ADOLESCENCE, MARRIAGE

Birth—Childhood Instruction—Puberty Rites—Marriage

BIRTH

IT was impossible to obtain definite data on the fertility of Bella Coola women, or on the period elapsing between marriage and the birth of the first child. Sterility is rare, though by no means unknown; on the other hand, there are several families with as many as eight or nine children. The changed conditions which have followed the advent of the white man seem to have had little influence on the high birth-rate, although infant mortality has increased enormously. Within the last few years this has diminished, so that the Bella Coola are now holding their own. Children are always desired, and although methods of abortion and infanticide have been known for many years, neither practice seems to have been sufficiently common to have produced an appreciable effect on the population. §42 [163] [165] [§47]

Pregnancy usually occurs during the year following marriage. Though its actual dependence upon coition is fully realized, yet the Bella Coola, religiously minded in this as in all other aspects of life, ascribe the condition to the four *Masmasalániq* acting on the behest of *Alquntäm*. It is believed that the Carpenters carve out the child who is to be born in the same way that a human craftsman manufactures some complicated object. Most individuals do not theorize to any extent upon the course of biological development, but are content to assume that *Alquntäm* has made the coming birth possible. [776] [773] §43

During pregnancy the expectant mother must observe certain restrictions. If she chews gum, she will have a difficult delivery; if she eats salmon tails, the feet of the infant will appear before the head, and although skilled assistants can usually rotate a child, this is a painful process which should be avoided. [§45] [§26]

843 be avoided. If she walks on a beaver dam, or dips her head
825 into a pool made by this animal, the birth of her infant will
be blocked in the same way that the dam restrains a stream.
This difficulty can be obviated, however, by dipping up the
water with her hands instead of bending her head to the surface
to drink. As far as possible, she must avoid being startled by
[774] small animals or reptiles; even if the excitement so caused is
too slight to expel her own spirit, it may be sufficient to damage
that of the foetus. Such dangers can be countered by means
of magical rites (I, p. 700). Her husband is also subject to
certain injunctions and prohibitions. If he eats beaver meat
his wife's delivery will be difficult. He must preserve a small
piece of the skin or an eye of every animal that he kills; a few
[846] days after birth the child is steeped in the smoke of a fire on
which these articles have been thrown. This prevents injury
from the father's quarry.[2]

A pregnant woman continues to reside in her own house,
where her condition is a source of interest to her friends and
relatives. There are no midwives with inheritable professional
844 prerogatives, but as the time for delivery draws near, arrange-
[424] ments are made for the mother or some other experienced
female relative to be in attendance. It is quite proper for the
husband to attend to this point, though it is customary for
elderly female relations to do so, sometimes those of the wife,
sometimes those of her husband. A woman who, having herself
borne children, has assisted at many births with success, is
often requested to be present, and it is taken as a matter of
course that she will be rewarded for her services.

When the pains of labour begin, the patient leaves the house
with her assistant or assistants. In summer the party goes to
some lonely spot in the woods where a rude wind-break may
have been erected; in winter, to a sheltered spot beneath a
[771] house. No man can be present, a point in which the Bella
Coola state that their culture differs from that of the Kwakiutl.
The midwife manipulates the infant so that the birth is made

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[2] This rite is described in detail later (I, p. 700).

as easy as possible. Women seldom experience difficulty and 844
suffer, on the whole, less than do white mothers. It is believed [776]
that *Snaiarnwax*, though invisible, is present on every occasion;
the rendering of assistance at childbirth is his one kindly act.

The umbilical cord was formerly cut with a mussel shell, [777]
but for many years the use of a metal knife has been customary.
The after-birth usually comes away easily, but if there is delay [845]
hot ashes are placed around the feet and at the back of the woman to accelerate its expulsion. It is immediately buried or placed beneath a large tree in the forest; if burnt, the infant will always be weakly. While one of the assistants disposes of it, another washes the new-born child. The cloths and dishes
used for this purpose are burnt; failure to do so is believed to [826]
cause the child to become blind through a white film forming over the eyeballs. Then the mother and midwives return to the house with the infant, who is a source of tremendous interest to the community. It is proper for the father to recompense the attendants at once, in accordance with their skill and his generosity. A woman who has had several children often assists the daughter of a friend, then, as she gains more experience, her reputation grows and her help is more commonly sought. At the time of this study, 1922, the sum of [465]
$2.50 was considered suitable recompense for a fairly proficient midwife.

A new-born child takes the breast readily and a mother 853
would be considered harsh indeed if she failed to suckle her infant whenever it cried, since scientific hours for feeding are not known. A child is wrapped in a shawl or a blanket and 854
carried by the mother wherever she goes; when in the house it sprawls contentedly on the floor, unhampered by clothing.
When the umbilical cord falls, it is preserved by the mother. [846]
Soon after birth, the parents make provision for their child's welfare by magical means (I, p. 700). The heavy infantile
death-rate of the Bella Coola cannot be attributed to lack of [165]
love or care on the part of parents, but the attention lavished is commonly not of the kind that assists a weakly child to survive the perils of infancy.

[illegible] the perils of infancy. During this period, the mother observes
846 various magical taboos to ensure the welfare of her offspring,
237 and endeavours to strengthen herself by rubbing her own body
with non-odoriferous oils obtained from dog-fish, geese, or fresh
olachen. Soft pounded salmon and water are added to an
853 infant's diet as soon as possible, though nourishment from the
breast frequently continues until a child is two, or even three
862 years of age. It is not uncommon to delay weaning until the
mother is again pregnant, when the child is deterred by the
application of soot to the breasts. Marital relations are recom-
846 menced as soon as the mother is strong enough; there is no
specified period of abstinence, nor does it matter whether or
not the woman is lactative.

845 Occasionally, an infant is born with teeth; such an one is thought to be the reincarnation of a dead ancestor, though no one knows which. A similar belief is held respecting a child with dimples in the lobes of its ears; these are regarded as remnants of the holes pierced for ear-rings. A child that cries in the womb is said to have great intellect.

847 In former times infanticide was practised for various
reasons. If a woman died in giving birth, it was customary
for her mother to kill the child unless one of her relatives was
able to suckle the motherless infant who was then given to her.
It was not unknown for the mother of a large family to ask the
midwife to kill the child in order to avoid an addition to her
responsibilities. An unmarried girl who became pregnant
[848] often went alone to the forest, delivered herself without assist-
ance, and killed her infant. This was considered to be the
kindest act, since an illegitimate child was said to be, "Like
a Dog." In some cases the prospective mother requested a
friend to cause abortion by kneading the stomach and uterus,
a method said to be effective and seldom fatal. How to do
[195] so is common knowledge, but to practise it is considered dis-
graceful, and the term *lemsil*, applied to such an one, is among
the most foul of Bella Coola opprobriums. It is believed that
842 a woman who has had several children can in some way prevent

further conceptions by wriggling her body on her haunches immediately after the delivery of a child. 842

To the Bella Coola religious concepts of birth are as important as the physiological aspects. The blood discharged at birth, and the mother from whom it has come, is [illegible], a word difficult to translate. It is applied to a person or thing which is taboo, and combines the significance of "uncanny," "abhorred," "to be avoided," "feared"; perhaps "unclean," in the biblical sense, is the best synonym. Essentially human, this blood is not only potent against supernatural beings, but is dangerous to man as well. For this reason a mother must never be delivered within a house. The smell of the unclean blood might kill all resident within, or at least prevent them receiving presents of any kind. Supernatural beings and inherent supernatural powers are alike repelled by it. 826 844 784

A recent mother is taboo and must exercise due precautions to prevent her baneful influence from affecting her associates, but this power is most strongly present in one who has borne twins. Even younger people, sophisticated in most matters, shudder when speaking of twins; fortunately, double births are not common. They are attributed to the entry of a salmon into the body, so that a twin is half-salmon, half-human. Occasionally a woman who is pregnant with twins discovers her condition in a dream and avoids the perils of a multiple birth by calling upon a shaman to remove the spirit from one foetus so that the infant will be born dead and deformed. If this is not done, the two infants arrive in due course, to the horror and grief of parents and relatives. Though abhorred, no case is known of the killing of a twin at birth. 845 [825] [787] [754] [847]

Instead of the two children being brought back to the village, word is sent to the father who must join his wife in the temporary shelter in the woods where delivery took place. For one year, they must not return home, and during this period must eat no salmon. Four times during the year they must shift from one shelter to another, each built on the bank of a small creek. The mother can draw water from this stream

845 alone, and when she leaves it, it dries up immediately. When a year has elapsed, the parents return home with their children and the father resumes the ordinary routine of life. For three years more the mother must remain in the house, leaving it only at night through a hole in the floor. Above all else, she must keep away from the river; she cannot draw water from it, nor can she cut salmon on its bank. One instance is remem-
[153] bered in which the parents of twins failed to observe these restrictions; their legs became swollen and they soon died. In addition to punishment of the offenders in cases such as
[825] this, there is danger that if they fail to obey the customary taboos the salmon will be insulted and avoid the Bella Coola River.

[778] After four years a mother of twins resumes her normal life, but she is henceforth endowed with special powers. If she
[777] wishes to see anyone who is absent, she has only to think of the person, and in her dreams she will be able to see him. She must never try to start up a dying fire by blowing upon it, since to do so would cause a gale. When a person sets out on any kind of an expedition from the house in which a mother of twins is living, the latter must chew a little food and spit it out towards the departing guest, otherwise he will fail in his venture.

845 Twins themselves, being akin to salmon, have miraculous
825 ability to see their fish-kinsmen and read their thoughts. Bella Coola mythology contains many stories of the way in which twins could talk with, and change into, salmon. Such knowledge is not limited to tales of the distant past. An elderly Bella Coola described the manner in which her grandmother, a twin related to Sockeye Salmon, was consulted by a man who had been unlucky with his weir. Gazing down into the water, this woman saw that the fish were avoiding his dam because of the charred uprights used in its construction; when these were changed he was successful in his fishing.

845 Twins are believed to possess remarkable ability from earliest childhood, and even to remember incidents occurring

before their birth. When the mother of the twin described in 845
the last paragraph was awaiting delivery in a temporary shelter
in the woods, its roof fell, cutting her head. The old woman
who mentioned this occurrence stated that both her grand-
mother, the Sockeye Salmon, and her sister, a Spring Salmon,
though still unborn, were aware of the accident and remem-
bered the comments of the midwife.

On account of their uncanny power, twins are considered
weaklings and usually die young in spite of the care lavished
upon them and the taboos observed by their parents.[9] A dead 766
twin, instead of being buried, is put in a box which is placed in
a tree far away from the village. Every year the river changes [823]
its course, eating into its banks in order to reach the tree con-
taining the body, and this continues until it reaches its goal
and sweeps away tree and coffin.

CHILDHOOD INSTRUCTION

When working in the field, an anthropologist almost inevi- 114
tably concentrates upon ceremonials and other epochs in an
individual's life, to the detriment of the daily routine which in
Bella Coola, as everywhere else, is fundamentally important
although it defies description on account of its intangibility.
A child grows up in a large house, occupied by several families, 855
in which there is little privacy. The parents provide food and
clothing, but more distant relatives take a greater share of
responsibility for this than do white people. When food is [867]
being given out, a child soon learns that he will be given some
of it, and that he will have his portion in any distribution of
presents. Furniture, bedding, and other necessities are re-
duced to a minimum, but a boy or girl is welcome to sleep with
relatives should his own parents wish to go hunting or fishing.
The sense of power possessed by a Bella Coola with many rela- [867]
tions is largely intangible, but it has practical applications as

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[9] It is probable that the arduous life led by a twin and its parents during the first year after birth lessens its chances of survival. Needless to say, this explanation does not find favour with the Bella Coola.

855 well, and these are soon learnt by the child who is fortunate
[867] enough to have many kinsmen. Primarily, responsibility rests with the parents for the care and support of their offspring, but they have the advice, assistance, and material aid of their relatives. Nor are these limited to the near kindred of either father or mother; all members of the ancestral family take their part. Housemates, also, even if unrelated, take an interest in any child who shares their habitation, irrespective of his rank.

Much of the care bestowed on children is of a magical nature and must be reserved until a later chapter. Little boys
868 follow their fathers on hunting expeditions and so acquire knowledge by practical experience, as do girls from their mothers with regard to household tasks and feminine occupations.
867 Even small children are quick to notice the attention paid to the orders of chiefs, and carry out their commands without
861 demur. A disobedient child is beaten or thrown into cold water; the parents usually act in such cases, though a near relative does not hesitate to do so, especially if he is a chief.
857 Like all other children, Bella Coola boys and girls are fond of
867 stories and listen eagerly to the tales told in the long evenings
538 by some old man or woman. Many of these are somewhat obscene, but they serve to teach much ancient lore, and at the same time to emphasize many taboos and restrictions which are thus assimilated without definite schooling. They illus-
[626] trate the laws of morality, as does the public disapproval shown to anyone who infringes some point of etiquette or behaviour.
[825] If a child makes fun of a cat-fish or a bull-head, he is not told to stop doing so; instead, one of his elders tells him how, in the distant past, there was a famine, and advises him not to scoff at the fish which alone saved his ancestors from starvation at that time. If a rude little boy laughs at a maimed or deformed
[732] man, he is told of *Ālalals*, a Bella Bella urchin who repeatedly mocked a one-eyed man and presently, himself, lost the sight of an eye.

867
[735] "Don't laugh at cripples, blind people, or those who are

poverty-stricken," say the elders. "If you do, you will become like them yourself." 867 [735]

As a boy grows older, his father insists that he wash, pray, and practise other ritual acts likely to win approval from supernatural beings. He is frequently beaten to inure him to hardship. By the time a youth is eleven or twelve years of age he has become fully acquainted with the principles of the potlatch system and a wise parent teaches him to remember debts. Taking his son to some quiet spot in the woods, he makes a small bundle of cedar twigs, for example, and tells him: 867 [861] 211 867

"So-and-so at Bella Bella gave you fifteen beaver skins. When you see this bundle you must think of those skins."

Then he takes another bunch, perhaps of spruce twigs, to represent a present from a Rivers Inlet chief. A bundle of nettle fibre may stand for a Kimsquit debt; one ornamented with a tuft of undyed cedar-bark, a gift from a *Talio* chief; a solid piece of alder stem, a local debt; another section of alder stem with a notch in it, another local debt, and so on. The son is expected to listen attentively, and to repeat after his father what each represents. Then the pupil turns his back and the instructor alters the positions of the bundles. His father tells him to look at them and repeat what each signifies. This is repeated time after time until a boy becomes familiar with remembering debts by means of symbols. In later years, if he becomes a chief, he will use this method for keeping his indebtedness in mind. No system of standardized signs has been evolved, each individual merely designates what he wishes by a mark which he alone can recognize.

A child grows up in the community, absorbing information and lore without conscious effort, learning the activities which he will later practise, fearing the supernatural beings that are dreaded by his parents, marvelling at the power of those endowed with supernatural ability, and generally fitting himself for the struggle of life. If his parents are wealthy, he may be fortunate enough to be given a sacred name and to partake in 869 [552]

864 initiation perfection, but he cannot himself carry out a cere-
556 mony until he has reached manhood.

PUBERTY RITES

881 The change from childhood to adult age is, of course, more obvious with girls than with boys, and the former alone must observe strict taboos. Menstrual blood, like that which follows delivery, is unclean, especially that emitted at the first discharge. A woman who has just given birth is a [illegible]; an
[784] adolescent girl, a [illegible], that is, "A Person Not Fully Tabooed"; the attitude with which the former is regarded is held, to a lesser extent, for the latter.

At the first indication, the girl asks a woman to inform her mother of her condition, and goes home immediately if she happens to be away at the time. Her parents at once make a small enclosure or bedroom of planks or matting in either of the front corners of the house, providing it with a trap-door and ladder by which she can leave without passing through the front door. There the girl must lie for four days, with legs close together and knees at the bosom, never stretched out straight. She is not allowed to drink anything, and must eat sparingly; if she should consume much food, she would be greedy when an adult. When necessary for her to leave the enclosure, a woman must always accompany her. Her mother, or some other female relative, provides her with the usual soft cedar-bark pads. On the fifth day, she leaves her shelter early in the morning with one feminine friend and goes to a secluded pool back in the forest, where she washes for the first time. Then she runs rapidly through the woods, which has the effect of making her a strong woman. Should a girl fail to do this,
[753] she would be afflicted with an illness caused by the salmon, become blind, and die young.

784 For one year an adolescent girl is subject to many restric-
881 tions. Her near approach to the river would offend the salmon and cause them to avoid Bella Coola, so she is not allowed to
[825] draw water, or even to appear on the beach. She may not eat

the front-door facing the river, but has to leave the house through the trap beneath the enclosure where she sleeps. The Bella Coola consider it unthinkable for a girl to disregard these prohibitions, but if this should happen, she would be chased home by her parents, by the Guardian of the River, or, in fact, by any elderly member of the community. The strongest reason for supporting these regulations is the belief that disobedience brings death; no one knows how it is inflicted, but a careless girl soon dies. During this period she cannot eat fresh salmon, though she is allowed them if they have been smoked for four or five days. The scanty meals are brought to her in the enclosure where she is virtually a prisoner. It is true that she can leave it and wander in the woods, but her comrades avoid her as being in an unclean condition of which they are afraid, and she is barred from taking part in all activities by the river which constitute so large a part of the life of the Bella Coola. A girl cannot pick berries during this time, or no more would grow in the valley which she had thus defiled; she must not touch anyone, nor allow anyone to touch her; she must not pass in front of a man; she must go to bed before everyone else in the house, and be the last to arise. The danger of breaking some taboo is so great that it is safer for a girl to remain within her enclosure where her mother, and other old women, gather to tell her the many things which it is fitting for an adult woman to know. This seclusion is not pleasant, but it unquestionably serves to emphasize the importance of married life to which it is a prelude. The writer remembers an occasion when a Bella Coola family was eating some fresh salmon while one of the daughters, who had recently reached adolescence, watched wistfully. Her grandfather rose and gave the child an orange, something that in his youth little girls did not receive such delicacies to ameliorate their lot.

Adolescent girls wear certain distinctive articles of clothing and ornaments. The most noticeable is a skullcap beaded with grease; this is the only time in a woman's life that a hat is worn. She also wears earrings, each consisting of a com-

[illegible] one year after puberty – [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

bands of four crescent-shaped shells, probably Dentalium, which are said to have been imported from the north in early times. These marks serve to indicate the position of the girl, who is both feared and respected, possessed of supernatural power, and yet harmful. Many Bella Coola stories describe how adolescent girls have been able to vanquish supernatural beings; perhaps the most striking of these is the manner in which they once saved mankind when the sun came too close to the earth. At the end of a year, or eleven months according to one old woman, the seclusion is terminated, and the girl resumes her normal activities. The first time she goes to the river she must throw on the water four pieces of dried, and four pieces of undried salmon-back. This is especially important if the salmon are running at the time, although no explanation of this ritual is given.

The resumption of her freedom indicates that a girl has reached marriageable age. Chiefs sometimes confine their daughters for even longer than a year, and usually delay their marriages for several years to demonstrate their importance, but this is not customary, and is it practised by other than wealthy individuals. It is not uncommon for a girl to wed before her year is over, in that case her restrictions automatically lapse. Chiefs never allow such a curtailment for their daughters, as to do so would diminish the prestige of the latter, and be detrimental to the status of their children when they marry and have families. Illicit intercourse with a secluded adolescent is considered not only illegal but disgusting as well. Between the period of confinement and marriage, intercourse is prohibited and guarded against by the parents of a girl, but is not considered filthy, and seems to have been fairly common in former times with the daughters of poor people and slaves. This sometimes took place before the first menstruation in spite of the disapproval with which this was regarded.

Although the menstrual blood which appears at the first discharge is considered more harmful than that emitted on later occasions, it is always regarded as [illegible] or unclean. It is

the most famous of all substances, and, therefore, a potent 836
protection against supernatural beings. It is valuable as a 841
defence against evil monsters, but it is equally deadly to 776
shamans and other human beings with supernatural powers.
In the distant past, Raven taught mankind that to sleep with a 834
menstruating woman would so blind a man that he would be 841
unsuccessful in hunting. The belief is that animals, knowing [773]
everything that takes place, avoid one who is so unclean. One
old man considered that he had failed to obey this injunction [826]
and considered his loss of virility as a punishment, overlooking
the fact that he was over seventy years of age.

The coming of adolescence in a boy is recognized by change 881
in voice and the other usual indications. He is neither taboo nor unclean, and consequently does not have to undergo any restrictions on his actions. There is no ceremony to mark the entry of a candidate adult membership of the tribe; instead, this comes gradually and puberty is no more than an indication of increasing age and strength.

MARRIAGE

Like most so-called "primitive" peoples, the Bella Coola 581
regard the married state as the normal condition of man. 589
Persons unwilling to wed is considered unnatural. Since the
numbers of the sexes is approximately equal, the only persons
forced to live alone are elderly widows and widowers, and those [735]
crippled, either mentally or physically. Such individuals are
looked upon as unfortunates; in fact, they have failed in one
of the most fundamental of life's struggles. Man provides fish 581
and game, builds houses and canoes, while woman collects
berries, makes robes, cooks, and performs the multitudinous [463]
small household tasks.

"So is it not to the benefit of each to marry?" say the Bella Coola.

Marriage is not a mere economic arrangement, nor is its
sole function to regulate relations between the sexes. Its most [585]
important factor is that it governs the status of the child.

581/ [181] Confidently believing that he has descended from ancestors who came to this earth in the beginning of time, a Bella Coola wishes to have his children firmly established in the path of his forbears. This can be accomplished only with the aid of a suitable mother. It follows that marriage is not primarily a matter of affection, but of the ancestral eligibility of the contracting parties.

CHOICE OF MATE

584 581/ Since the initiative for marriage is taken by the man in almost all cases, it will be convenient and proper to describe the factors which enter into the search for a wife, remembering that the converse governs the decision of the woman and her relatives. The choice of the woman who is to be the mother of the children who will carry on the traditions of the ancestral family is a matter of too great importance to be entrusted to any young person. Accordingly, while their son is yet a child, his parents often discuss who would be a suitable wife for him. They view the matter from a strictly business standpoint.
581/ Proud of their own ancient lineage, they would not demean themselves by allowing their son to marry a girl who could not trace her ancestry back to the first people, or with one whose forbears had disgraced themselves by marriage with slaves. Instead, it is a matter of pride for parents to have as daughter-in-law the child of a powerful chief. Nor can they choose a
582 woman too closely related to their son. Marriage with a sister, an aunt, a niece, or any first cousin is strictly prohibited. No reason for these laws could be obtained; the Bella Coola consider that it would be "indecent" or unclean so to marry, but have theorized no further about the matter. An adopted child
[597] is regarded in the same light as an own child. The Bella Coola
[582] know, and are amused by, the regulation of marriage according
[171] to crests among the northern tribes, but practise nothing of the same nature themselves. In fact, marriages usually take place among those who are descended from one ancestor and who have, accordingly, the same crest, though the significance

of the term is very different from its use among the northern tribes. 582 171

Having eliminated those girls who are too closely related, or who are unsuited on account of the poverty of their parents, 581 the father and mother can concentrate on others of about the same age as their son. The most desirable is a member of the ancestral family of one of the parents. This obviates the dangers and difficulties of marriage with a stranger, and any children will be born into the close-knit circle of related ancestors stretching back to the beginning of time. They consider that such a child is fortunate, as if he were held close in the spiritual embrace of his powerful forefathers of antiquity. Each ancestral family is jealously proud of its ancient traditions and prerogatives, and as some of these are transmitted at marriage, it follows that a mating within its ranks is desirable from a business standpoint. Moreover, it is recognized that the husband obtains more presents than the wife [583] at the wedding and that her relatives are more likely to be generous when their son-in-law is one to whom they are related. Indeed, some ancestral families are so "stingy," (to use the Bella Coola expression), that for generations they have habitually [584] married endogamously. In such cases it is not unknown for the children of first cousins to marry, though this is usually regarded as not quite proper. The most common marriages 582 are between the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of first cousins, or between the child and grandchild of a first cousin when of suitable age. According to mythology, unions have [173] sometimes taken place between brother and sister in order to preserve the traditions within the family, and it appears highly probable that marriages have occasionally occurred between first cousins, although no specific instance of this could be learnt. As long as the laws against incest are obeyed, any girl of appropriate age who is addressed as cousin (I, p. 123) is a fit partner. Since ancestral families have usually become localized in certain villages, there is a strong leaning to local endogamy, though this is not compulsory. The restrictions

582 on marriage are of a bilateral nature, and the preferences are equally bilateral, with a tendency to become patrilineal, in accordance with the patrilineal tendency of the ancestral family as already described.

581 Although these considerations greatly restrict the selection of a suitable daughter-in-law, a number of choices always remain. The parents of the prospective bridegroom consider the material advantages of each of them. Since the ability of a man to give potlatches depends largely on the wealth contributed by his wife's immediate family, wise parents eliminate a girl whose brothers are lazy. Moreover, they know that their son's children will receive prerogatives from their maternal grandparents, hence it is desirable to choose those who have prized *kusiut* dances, or other valuable rights. Ancestral names are not so important, because these are the potential property of all members of the ancestral family. A great consideration is the industriousness of the girl herself, though this is of less moment than the working-ability of her father and brothers. Marriage was discussed with a very old man who had had four wives. After describing the idiosyncrasies of the first, he continued:

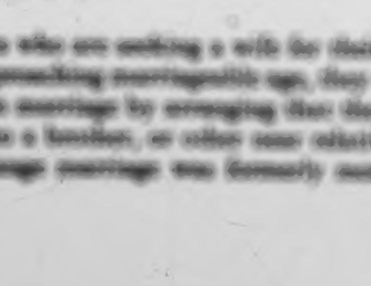
"My last wife was by far the best. Her family gave me many presents."

583 586 Frequently the choice of a wife is simplified by an institution which may be termed "return marriage." If, for example, a few generations ago a woman was married into another ancestral family, or into a distant branch of her own, it was considered proper for a man of her family to arrange to wed a woman of the family into which she had married. During the previous wedding time the woman's family bestowed much wealth and valuable prerogatives; it is proper that the latter should be restored to the ancestral family of their owners. A return marriage also binds two families together, with consequent strength to the children. A few examples will make the matter clear.

I.McIlwraith, T.F. (1922-1924)1948
[illegible] Bella coola [illegible]

In the beginning of time it is believed that a son of Sninlaux married the daughter of a Kitkatla chief (I, p. 170). As dower she brought her husband several Kitkatla names, which were transmitted in time to her children and which remained in Smaiaxl's home, Kimsquit, for many generations. The Bella Coola believe that it was remembered for hundreds of years that these designations did not belong there. Whenever one was conferred, the myth was recounted to tell how it first came to Kimsquit; whereas in Kitkatla when the myth from which the names were taken was related, it was always added that those in question could not be used since they were now in Kimsquit. About one hundred and fifty years ago, Anulaxl, a Kimsquit woman, was married to a Kitkatla man to repay this debt, and cement friendship between the two tribes. She took as dower the names long ago brought from Kitkatla. Similarly, if any name or other prerogative of an ancestral myth has been alienated from the ancestral family to which it belongs, a father searches for a woman who will be able to restore it to his son as a marriage gift. The word used for searching is "hunt," the term applied to seeking for hunting animals. 173 58 645

The accompanying pedigree illustrates a return marriage. Qoatlil's daughter was married to a Fort Rupert man and took with her as dower several Bella Coola names and other prerogatives. The loss of these was remembered and they were brought back by the marriage of Oikala, a member of Qoatlil's ancestral family, with a daughter of the woman who had gone to Fort Rupert. Usually several generations elapse before a return marriage is made. This incident was perfectly well known to the son of Oikala.



If parents who are seeking a wife for their son have also a daughter approaching marriageable age, they may try to avoid a later return marriage by arranging that their daughter shall be married to a brother, or other near relative, of their son's wife. Exchange marriage was formerly more common than 513 [178] to possess, though even more is considered highly desirable. The sentiment is that already described: the more closely the parents are bound together by ties of common ancestry, the greater will be their children's ceremonial strength. Further, reciprocal alliances of this type obviate all danger of feuds, since certain marriages are so required.

In recent years it has become fashionable, or socially "smart," with some Bella Coola families to seek wives from unrelated ancestral families, and even from other tribes. It is said that this practice was initiated by *Potlos*, an important chief who died between 1875 and 1880. He sought foreign marriages on account of the prerogatives which were brought as dowries by his wives, and considered that such rights, transmissible to his children, more than compensated for the lack of strength provided by others ancestors. Many have followed his example, with the result that some ancestral families have entirely abandoned the endogamic tendency. Boas (p. 124) has made the same observation. Although this exogamic principle is directly contrary to that which has already been described, yet it should be noted that each has the same explanation: the search for a wife able to bring most to her as yet unborn children.

Should the parents consider a foreign woman as wife for their son, then her worth is discussed from every angle. One woman may have the right to good hunting grounds, the family of another may have some valuable social prerogatives, a third some family crest. Intense thought is put on the relative values of these. One man had heard of the French system of dot, and emphasized strongly how far superior to, and more sensible it was than the Canadian practice. In recent years the younger Bella Coola has been arranging their own marriages, and the older men lament bitterly that they are influenced only by the beauty or working ability of the girl, not by her real worth, the prerogatives which she can bring to her children.

Although parents consider chiefly the ancestry of their

future daughter-in-law, yet they are not entirely oblivious to 584
the girl herself. She must be of about the same age as their 581
son, preferably a year or two older. Should the wife be the
younger, it is thought that she ages rapidly until she appears
as old as her husband. Boys usually marry at seventeen or
eighteen, and it is essential that the woman chosen for wife [582]
must have been concealed for at least a year following puberty. Nor is a weakly girl chosen, or one of notoriously bad temper. As their son reaches the age of marriage, his parents usually consult him, though it is not usual for him to gainsay their wishes. A girl who has been leading a notoriously lax life is not desired, though this is most unusual for the daughter of a chief. The feeling is that such a girl would be a faithless and fickle wife, rather than any objection to her sins as such.

Realizing the importance of marriage, the parents of a boy 584
discuss and plan the event for years, weighing the relative value of girls whom they think they could obtain for their son. By the time he has reached the age of fourteen or fifteen, they have decided on the most suitable partner, and it then becomes necessary to consult her parents and win their approval.

PERIOD OF ENGAGEMENT

When the parents of the young man (whom it will be convenient to term X) have at last decided on a suitable partner, they next choose an intermediary for the first proposal. In all these discussions the elderly relatives of the parents take a leading part, and especially their own parents if alive. Sometimes X's father himself interviews the father of the girl (here termed Y), at other times he asks some friend to do so. The matter is not supposed to be generally known, and the intermediary goes to Y's father's house, and quietly tells her parents that X's family would like their daughter to become X's wife. This preliminary asking is done unostentatiously, at any time and in any place, and the messenger withdraws after giving his message. In all probability Y's family have already ex-

584 ceived information of the proposed marriage, but they always plead ignorance, and deliberate for several days. Y's parents and other relatives take part in the discussion, and Y herself may likewise be taken into confidence. Although a daughter has, theoretically, little choice, in practice she exercises a great [571] deal of influence. Her mother and father weigh the suitor's eligibility not only with regard to wealth and ancestral possessions, but consider his character. An immoral young man is not desirable, though neither is one who is impotent.

If Y's relatives agree to the proposal, some one of them informs the intermediary, or X's father, and the young people are considered to be engaged. The fact is supposed to be kept secret for several days, although the news usually becomes known sooner. X's relatives as soon as possible take a number
583 of presents to Y's family. These are given in private, and are
584 termed "secret gifts"; they are said to give strength to the future children. Since no witnesses are present it follows that no social prestige accrues from the transaction. The relatives included in the "family" of either X or Y are not always the same; uncles, aunts, grandparents, may or may not take part in the giving and receiving of presents, the parents alone always do so. Sometimes distant relatives take a leading part in the arrangements, either in hope of receiving valuable gifts, or of obtaining social influence by lavish giving. If X's relatives have reason to believe that Y's family will accept their proposal, several of them may go in company and actually carry the "secret gifts" to Y's house at the time of making the first proposal. Should this be rejected, they merely carry away their goods, and as the affair has been private, no one's vanity is hurt.

The acceptance of "secret gifts" binds the engagement of X and Y, but a few days elapse before this is made public. If
582 X's family is wealthy, his father, or other near relative, pres-
584 ently invites all the inhabitants of the village to his house.
535 The singers, in their usual stations behind the fire, strike up
575 the tune of some [illegible] and the course of the song, thus [illegible],

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dancers in time to it. Using their own discretion, the musicians proceed to beat out the time for *kusiut* after *kusiut*, and each performs. In like fashion they then beat out the tune of one sisaok after another, and each member of that society gives his dance. Since none of the supernatural beings is present, the affair is non-sacred. The singers consult with the host as to the number of songs to be used. When they stop at last, X's father, aided by his younger relatives, gives valuable presents of food. No mention of the coming marriage is made, but the rite gives the donor an opportunity of displaying his generosity as a chief and indirectly increases the importance of the wedding because the value of the food will later be remembered in connection with it.

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If X's father is very wealthy, he may recall the people for several nights, always providing the same type of entertainment, and always giving food. He uses his own judgment as to the number of such entertainments, but at that which he decides shall be the last, he announces:

"Tomorrow we shall go to Y's father's house."

If X's father does not wish to give away such large quantities of food he may omit the dancing in his own house and make this announcement at a potlatch, a *kusiut* dance,[1] or any other public gathering. But the more elaborate the ceremonial, the greater is the importance of the marriage in the eyes of the Bella Coola, which in turn increases the strength of the children who may result from it.

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On the morning after this declaration, X's father calls to his house those whom he wishes to be witnesses of the alliance that has been planned. These include as many of his relatives and those of his wife as he desires, and often intimate friends. These individuals comprise the group interested, on behalf of X, in the marriage; they provide the goods which are given for him, and receive the presents from the corresponding group of Y's relatives. Anyone having the necessary financial ability

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[1] This is probably a recent innovation.

[illegible] is glad of this opportunity to demonstrate it, but a poor man
[illegible] can decline without loss of social esteem.

Carrying presents, the specific value of which is immaterial, they set out for Y's house. Her father, accompanied by his relatives, has been warned and is waiting at the door. A herald, or other eloquent speaker, addresses them on behalf of X's father. He says in effect:

"We do not come secretly or wrongfully to steal something from you. We come with the loftiest intentions. Great is our affection for your child. What we are about to do has long been a practice of our two families (if the two families have intermarried in past generations); let us do according to our wisdom. I am the opening."[1]

Then X's father throws on the ground several stones, representing slaves who will later be given to Y's relatives. These are said to "open the door," that is, to make clear the entrance of X and his relatives into Y's house. There is the added significance that they strew upon a clear road the children whom it is hoped will result from the marriage. This thought finds expression in many rites both during engagement and at the wedding ceremony itself. After throwing the stones, X's father gives gifts to Y, to her father, her mother, and to her other relatives assembled. These are of such great value that X's father sometimes almost impoverishes himself, but he knows that though these will never actually be returned, Y's family will be proud to uphold their dignity, and the importance of Y, by equally lavish giving.

Y's father now invites his guests to enter his house, and ushers them to their duly validated seats where the food that has been prepared is served with all solemnity in the usual feast form. Then Y's family give presents to X's family, that is, to all who have come to share in the marriage. These goods are known as "wedding clothes"; they are usually of low value than the presents just given by X's relatives, though occasionally they may exceed them. Y's father, or a herald, or an eloquent friend on his behalf, speaks to the following effect: 583 584

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[1] Opening, [illegible]. This term is applied to the whole ceremony at Y's house and likely has a double significance, in opening the way for the marriage and clearing the path for the future children.

"Be bold. Henceforth you will have to work a very long time for us. We will let you know when we need your services."

The significance of this speech lies in the fact that X, and to a certain extent his relatives, are expected to perform almost menial tasks for Y's father during the period of engagement, which has now been duly ratified. X's father and his followers now leave Y's house. It is immaterial whether or not X and Y themselves have been present. It is important that this formal acknowledgment of the engagement should take place during the day; otherwise any children resulting from the marriage could be shamed by having it said to them: "Your parents were not married in the open light of day." [586]

For a varying length of time X now acts almost as a servant to Y's father. He does not live with her family, but he cuts wood, draws water, and performs other menial tasks. Whenever a member of X's family gives a ceremony, he takes care to give lavish presents to Y's relatives. If it is impossible to hold a sacred rite, X's father is at least expected to invite Y's family to a ceremonial feast, and also to share with them any game that he may kill. Meanwhile, X and Y are not subject to any restrictions as to seeing each other. In theory if they should cohabit it would "spoil" the engagement, but in most cases when this occurs, as it often does, the matter is simply hushed up. [illegible]

Children whose parents were long engaged are said to be "heavy"; their entry into life having been prepared with careful thought and due ceremony, so that their [illegible] are [illegible] to [illegible] with success to the position of chief. When such a child is born, the relatives are eager to tell their fellow villagers to render a name-song after birth, and the infant enters life with this advantage. There is no specific length of time for engagements; if X and Y are the children of influential chiefs, the 584 [591] [585]

584 preliminary agreement may have been made while they were only seven or eight years old, though marriage seldom occurs before the age of seventeen or eighteen. More often the agreement is made when X and Y have passed the age of puberty, and they wait for about two years before marrying.

583 425 553 [584] Throughout this period, X's relations are expected to give at least one feast at which Y's relations are the guests of honour, and always receive presents. At one of these feasts X's father, with the concurrence of his relations, may mark his approval of the coming event by bestowing on Y's father, or one of her other relations, an ancestral name from his family myth. This does not become the absolute property of Y's family, since the myth in which it is embodied does not belong to them, unless, of course, they are members of the same ancestral family. It is fitting that a name of this kind be bestowed by the recipient on one of Y's children, or returned to X's family a few generations later by a return marriage. If this is not done, in course of time the designation is apt to be regarded by Y's family as their own. If there are no children, Y's relatives should give back the name to X's family, but there are many instances of feuds caused by failure [627] to do so. According to mythology, prerogatives may sometimes [773] be given outright, without thought of their use by the resultant children, or of their being restored by return marriages. It is claimed that the people of the Kimsquit River have, [423] through such a present, the inalienable title to use a certain spot in the Kitlope River for their olachen nets, and likewise the Kitlope people have an irrevocable right to the Kimsquit name *Sisilomq*. These two prerogatives were transferred at the beginning of time. At present, anyone bestowing outright his family prerogatives would be considered weak-minded and the other members of the ancestral family would [571] strenuously object. Considerations of this sort make it desirable to seek a wife within the ranks of the ancestral family.

During the period of engagement, Y's family may present a name, or names, to X's father, with the same conditions as those just described.

those just described. The giving of these at this time is not obligatory, nor does it affect the validity of the coming marriage. It is merely a mark of friendly feeling between the two groups of relatives, and, by adding to the importance of the event, increases the potential strength of the unborn children. 583

If either X or Y should die during the period of engagement, the presents, or their equivalent, must be returned to the donors. No formal methods are employed to ensure this, but the force of public opinion suffices to compel a man to do that which is proper; in fact, he is anxious to do so. If Y should die, an effort is made to replace her with a sister, cousin, or other near relative, so that the friendly relations entered upon by the two families may not be lost. The gifts mutually given by the two families may be returned and redonated or the substitute simply takes Y's place without further arrangement. Sometimes, in spite of the wishes of their parents and the elaborate rites carried out, either X or Y breaks the engagement by going to live with somebody else. It is then a mark of pride for the family of the offender to return the gifts they have received, and almost equally a mark of honour for the aggrieved party to give back what has been bestowed upon them, in order to demonstrate how little value they place on the possession of goods. 584 [583] [431] [584] [586]

Though a lengthy engagement is desirable, it may be curtailed. If, for example, one of X's relatives should die before the usual period has elapsed, Y's father may suggest an immediate wedding. He knows that X's family will have heavy expenses in connection with the burial and mourning rites, hence it is courteous to offer a quick marriage with the financial advantages accruing to them at the ceremony. In this case, X either does not work at all for Y's family, or for only a short time. Moreover, if Y reaches marriageable age without her father receiving suitable proposals, he can himself take the initiative by consulting the parents of an eligible young man. If the suggestion is agreeable, the engagement is announced in the manner already described, and the marriage takes place [764]

584 as soon as possible. Though strictly legal, and commonly practised even long ago, this is not considered a desirable preliminary, since the children lack the strength which would have been theirs if their parents had been long engaged. In recent
171 years the custom of short engagements has become popular,
584 though the older Bella Coola feel resentment, saying that the woman is simply "bought" with goods or money at the actual wedding. The return of such sums in due course does not compensate for the omission of the lengthy period of engagement. A few years ago a powerful chief even "bought" husbands for his grand-daughters. His influence was so great that by bestowing large sums on the families of the youths they accepted the young women as wives. The girls in question were desirable in every way, according to Bella Coola standards, but by marrying without a long engagement and suitable presents the husbands, and their families, failed to live up to the dignity of their ancestry. These are breakings down of the ancient rites, and as such are lamented by the older people.

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584 Sometimes, despite the wishes of their parents, a boy and girl announce their desire to marry by living together. After much storming, the parents usually decide to make the best of a bad business by performing the marriage rites as soon as possible and by lavish expenditure on them to lessen the impediment placed against the future offspring by lack of long engagement of their parents. But such a child can never be
[587] called an [illegible], which has the significance of something good that has long been sought for, such as a smooth-grained tree that carpenters like. It will thus be seen that the marriage ceremony must be carried out, irrespective of whether or not it has been preceded by a lengthy period of engagement in which the first proposal was made by the boy's family, by a shorter one in which the girl's family took the initiative, or by no period of engagement whatever. These rites can now be described.

MARRIAGE RITES

Y's family decide when the period of engagement shall be terminated. Although it is considered undignified for X or his relatives to hurry them in this matter, there is always a certain amount of urging. Y's father has strong reasons for procrastination. A long engagement strengthens the status of the children whom his daughter may bear, and besides, he frequently receives presents from X's relatives. As Y's relatives will have to bear the heavier part of the expenses of the wedding, it may be necessary for them to delay it for years while saving the requisite goods. The ceremony may take place at any time of the year. Foreign guests are occasionally invited, but usually only the members of X's and Y's village are present. If the marriage should be with the child of a foreign chief his relatives and friends are present to take part. When Y's relatives decide that they are ready, they choose the actual day after consultation with X's family, though the assumption is that Y's father merely informs X's father of the date. 584 585

It is incumbent on X's family to proclaim the event on the day preceding the ceremony. In the late afternoon his father sends a herald through the village calling out: 585 203

"*Qaiwap*, ye chiefs! *Qaiwap*, ye wives of chiefs! *Qaiwap*, ye commoners!"

The actual meaning of *qaiwap* is unknown, though it is well understood to be an invitation to gather for the commencement of a wedding. In conjunction with the summons, X's ancestral name is used, although all in the village are probably well aware of what is about to take place. It is noteworthy that at a marriage the guests, as well as the participants, are called by the ancestral names, as opposed to the *kusiut* ones by which individuals who own such are generally known. Red colouring is much in evidence at weddings; heralds smear their faces with red paint and the guests similarly tint themselves. They wear collars, wristlets, and anklets of undyed cedar-bark, and cover themselves with eagle down. [551] 585 [551] [302] [301]

585 In the gathering dusk all assemble in X's house; Y's relatives attend or not as they wish. X's father would feel insulted if anyone else should stay away without a valid excuse, but in point of fact everyone is eager for an evening's entertainment. The singers take their accustomed places behind the fire and the guests arrange themselves in the house without reference to rank. The musicians strike up the *kusiut* song of anyone present, and the person so indicated dances. The first tune used is frequently that of X's father, and then that of his mother, but there is no fixed rule about this. The singers
[535] choose and beat out tune after tune, and guest after guest dances, but, since none of the supernatural beings is present, the affair is of a non-sacred nature. After exhausting the most popular *kusiut* songs, the musicians beat out the *sisaok* songs of many of the guests who, in succession, dânce to them; the songs of shamans are used in like fashion. Sometimes the singers continue until everyone present has danced, at other times they curtail the ceremony, as they think fit. When they decide to stop, they intimate this to X's father, who superintends the distribution to the guests of whatever kind of food has been provided.

During the meal, a fluent speaker stands up and expounds
537 on behalf of X's father the ancestral myth in which his son's
585 ancestral name is embodied. Sometimes X's father acts as his
[208] own orator, but usually a herald is called upon. Only sufficient details are given to show the importance of X. The myth may either be one of the most ancient type dealing with the first settlement of this earth, or one of later date describing the exploits of X's famous ancestors; but in either case, as shown by the examples given in the last chapter, each contains an account of a marriage. It is always known, although not generally described, that at each of these several dancers performed, their number varying between two and eighteen. The orator, when outlining the myth, stresses this part of it, and always announces how many danced at that time; with the statement that there will be a like number on the morrow. In

the same manner the fluent speaker outlines a myth belonging 537 to the ancestral family of X's mother, again with emphasis on 585 the dancers used by her ancestors. X, as a member of both ancestral families, can combine his rights from both sides, but it is customary for him to use no more than five or six performers. Should X have no claim to this privilege from either mother or father, an almost unthinkable situation, he is able [426] to borrow the prerogative of using some from friends. The sentiment on which this oration of myths is based is the one so often mentioned; it marks the close relationship between the future children and their noble ancestors of old, a source of strength to the former.

X's father now names those whom he wishes to assist him 585 on the following day. These are the dancers, who are chosen [595] primarily for their skill in dancing, and secondarily in accordance with their rank. With them he selects a number of persons to stand near and help or "cherish" them as they perform. He also asks the services of some of the women who are professional droners; of the keeper of the marriage song of his [614] ancestral family; and, finally, of a number of men to sit near the singers and assist them with suggestions. It would be most exceptional for anyone so called upon to decline the honour. It is near morning by this time and the guests depart.

On the following morning, the actual wedding day, X's father calls to his house those selected the previous evening as dancers and their assistants. The former wear blankets decorated with small copper ornaments[4] and carry circular wooden [534] rattles provided with handles. Their clothing and rattles may be their own, but if they do not possess suitable attire, it is incumbent on X's father to provide them. Skins are piled up within the house, and some of these are said to "make soft the

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[4] At the present time there is uncertainty as to the proper clothing of a marriage [292] dancer. Several informants stated that it was a copper-decorated blanket, whereas others said that there was no special attire; one man claimed that an attempt was [535] made to imitate the form and costume of X's first ancestor, and another that a usual costume was used. Probably there was no uniformity in custom. [184]

585 handles of the rattles"; symbolizing that they are paid to protect the hands, though the dancers derive no benefit from the gifts, which are stacked with others for later distribution to Y's family. A large amount of provisions has been prepared and placed in boxes, one for each member of Y's family. In many cases it is difficult to estimate how much food will be required, and if there is a surplus, it is eaten by the performers and other assistants.

When all are ready they rush forth; dancers, dancers' assistants, and young relatives of X, followed more sedately by his father. The rest of the villagers watch with interest, but do not take part in the ceremony. Choosing a position outside Y's house, the singers beat the time of the marriage
[593] song used by X's ancestors; if the words are known they sing
[424] them. Like the prerogative of marriage dancers, there may not be a marriage song embodied in every origin myth, but if
[426] X lacks such he is usually able to borrow one.[9] The keeper of the song is stationed near the singers, ready to help them with the words or the tune, if necessary. Meanwhile the
[595] dancers are performing on the sidewalk outside Y's house. Each uses whatever type of dance he chooses, kusiut, sisauk, [illegible], or even shaman's, but all dance simultaneously, though without paying greater attention to each other than is
[593] necessary to avoid collisions. The professional dancers accompany the singing with their high-pitched quavers.

Meanwhile Y's father, surrounded by his relatives and friends, waits in readiness within their house. Y herself is

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[9] The supposed origin of marriage songs has been described in vol. I, chap. [illegible]. They are less strongly preserved as prerogatives than some elements of origin myths; in fact some keepers of the songs are willing to perform at any wedding, although this may be a modern development. The keeper, either man or woman, is chosen by
[614] the senior members of the ancestral family, after discussion with the singers. It is his duty to remember text and tune, and the only pecuniary advantage is from the presents made by those to whom he teaches it. Some songs have words, others only a tune. The text of a song brought down by *Alquntam* to *Snutlele* is:

"Hello, *Snutlele*! We do as we have done before. Please make good the path for those who are about to marry."

Alquntam obtained this song from his heavenly comrades and used it at his own marriage, as his male descendants have since done.

[illegible]

them, taking as inconspicuous a part as X does in the whole affair. As the singers start the marriage song, some of X's relatives carry into Y's house a part of the goods which X's relatives have amassed for the occasion, deposit them on the floor near the door, and then withdraw. These goods are said, "to sweep the house." Long ago they are said to have been of great value, though nowadays small presents are considered ample. Any member of Y's family can accept one by picking it from the floor, but as he is expected to return the gift with something of greater value, sometimes nothing is taken. Should none of his relatives appear willing to do so, it devolves on Y's father to accept the present.

When the marriage song has ended, X's father gives to some strong youth narrow strips of gee-cloth with the [illegible] still attached. Carrying these in one hand the young man runs up and down the sidewalk, waving his arms, and at intervals throwing one of the strips into the air, away from himself. All the younger people of the village pursue him, and a wild scramble takes place for each strip. Sometimes, instead of running up and down, the tossing is done in a clear space near Y's house. Only the sons of important chiefs are prohibited from this sport, since it is thought to be beneath their dignity. It is an animated scene, in which the participants thoroughly enjoy themselves. Heralds have the right to ask any dancer for his clothing, and unless he is willing to lose this, he must give a present to the one who has demanded it. This is a constant source of amusement to the onlookers. Nothing is known of the origin or meaning of the wholesale giving away of strips of gee-cloth, nor why the heralds should be able to demand clothing on this occasion.

"It has always been done," the [illegible] say simply.

When the noise has somewhat subsided, the singers again beat out the time of the marriage song, and again the dancers begin to perform. Y's father then sends out one of his male relatives, with gifts, "to stop the dance." The bearer gives a present to one of the dancers, who ceases his gyrations, then

283 to the others in succession. If Y's father is not wealthy, he may dispense with presents to the dancers, who before long come out of their own accord. When the song is finished, more strips of goat-skin are thrown in the manner already described. Then the song is sung for the third time, accompanied by the dancers who have not been "stopped" by the receipt of gifts. Again Y's father's friend brings out presents, to "stop" more of the dancers. After another disposal of goat-skin, and a fourth singing, all have been "stopped." Care is taken that at least one dancer is left to accompany the fourth singing of the song.

X's relatives now send in valuable presents to Y, her father, mother, and other relatives, and also to those who wish to associate themselves with Y's father in the marriage transaction, prompted by kindly feelings towards him, or, it may be, through a desire to display publicly their wealth and importance. The number of these individuals has been communicated secretly to X's kinsmen, who are thus able to send a present to each, such as a canoe, a slave, a marten, fur, or goat-skin blanket, or some equally treasured object. These gifts are called "weapons of war," since the assumption is that X is acting like a warrior in taking something of value from Y's family. At the same time the goods that Y's father has given to stop the dancers are returned to him [illegible].

Y's father now invites X's party into the house by calling out:

"[illegible] [illegible], [illegible] [illegible]." "Enter you war-party, enter ye chiefs."

They go into the house and sit in a group in the place of honour behind the fire. Some of the other villagers may crowd in to watch, remaining near the front door, but having no part in the proceedings. Y's father superintends a distribution of food to his guests, sometimes a lavish feast, at other times a small meal, depending on the food supply and time of year.

[299] In some cases, though not always, Y's father sings a [illegible] song at this juncture, emphasizing the importance of his ancestry.

if a grandchild be born they will give him a certain name if a boy, or another if a girl, so that henceforth no one can take that title for himself, even though it is not in use. As already mentioned, even when a name has duly passed to one of the children it can be recalled in future generations by a return marriage. The transmission of names, or the promising of them to children yet unborn, is perhaps the most binding feature of the whole marriage rite. Mythology contains instances in which names, and other prerogatives, have been given away outright. Cases are cited by the Bella Coola where a father-in-law gives hunting-grounds as "food" for the use of the relatives of his son- or daughter-in-law, but it is usual merely to promise the use of them to the grandchildren.

Since the transference of names, or other prerogatives, is the dominant motif of Bella Coola marriages, it is necessary to digress still further in an attempt to analyse the concepts at the base of the transaction. If the contracting parties are members of different ancestral families, or even of different branches of the same family, there is a feeling of strain and unpleasantness in the intimate relations into which they are brought. There is a conflict of desires. On one hand is the wish to keep the family prerogatives from going afield; on the other, a wish that they should go afield to show the importance of the bride or bridegroom. If children result, the matter is easy, since they are equally members of the ancestral families of mother and father and form a bond which draws the ancestral units into the closest community of interests. Return-marriages will then be sought by successive generations, until the prerogatives of the two families become so closely intertwined that a child will, indeed, be born into the ranks of [illegible] from both parents. But when there are no children the matter is complicated, since the recipients of [illegible] try to keep them [illegible]. They may do so with the best intentions, feeling that it would be a slight to the donors to give them back. Bella Coola etiquette is not sufficiently exact to stipulate what should be done. If the

one of his female relatives were murdered at Kimsquit. The above was never disclosed, but some of the Bella Coola believe that it was done by one of Hamanai's relatives, and that the dispute about names was quite sufficient to furnish an excuse for the deed.

It is hoped that these two instances will serve to emphasize why the Bella Coola prefer marriages within the circle of the ancestral family. When this takes place, names are usually given outright, and are merely promised for the use of the future children.

Hamanai = ♀

[illegible] = [illegible] = another woman

King George = ♀

Jack King George = [illegible]

After this digression, to return to the marriage of ♀ and ♂. The ceremony is taking place in the house of ♀'s father, and the parents of each participant have impersonated parts of their origin myths, and promised names for the resultant children.

Then ♂'s relatives give numerous presents to ♀'s family, in each case including those who are associating themselves with the contract. Canoes, slaves, blankets, and other articles of great worth are given; they are said to be "bed covering" for ♀. The greater their value, the greater her prestige. The father asks a Raven chief to address the assemblage, speaking as though he were ♀. He says in effect:

"My father, my mother, my brothers, my uncles, and their associates have given me my bed covering."

These presents are the binding factors of the wedding. They are said to lock the girl in her husband's house, and accordingly are sometimes called, "rope fastenings." This is only done when a woman is married for the first time.

Another orator now holds forth on behalf of ♂'s father:

"What we do today is no small matter. We have done today what was done in former times, and what shall be done in the future."

One of ♀'s relatives now whispers to ♀'s father that it is time to lead away the bride. One of ♂'s party, either man or woman, comes forward, takes ♀ by the hand and guides her to a place among ♂'s people, close to ♂ himself. ♀'s father gives the conductor presents, which are not returnable. Without further ceremony, ♂'s party returns to his house, taking the bride with them. She and ♂ usually sit close together for the rest of the rite, but their actions are really of slight importance.

As soon as is after the return from ♀'s home, a messenger is sent to invite her father and other relatives to ♂'s house. The guests seat themselves behind the fire, and a number of others crowd in to watch and listen. ♂ and ♀ are both present, but do not take any leading part in the ceremony. A large amount of food is given to the guests, provided, of course, by ♂'s father, and, as they are eating, a few gifts, termed "food," may be given. Then an eloquent chief expounds in detail the manner in which ♂'s ancestors were married in the days of antiquity. As soon as his speech is ended, ♂'s father distributes to ♀'s relatives presents, which are spoken of as "clothing." Theoretically, the presents "become clothing" for this purpose, but in reality they are returned later on as a means of increasing the prestige of each recipient. In consequence, care is taken to ensure that individuals with influence receive more than others. These presents are often of considerable value, since they not only mark the noble sentiments of ♂'s family with respect to him, but they are also a sound financial investment on behalf of ♂, whose wife will help him in future undertakings. Goods received as "food" at the meal are returned in the same fashion as the "clothing." This completes the marriage ceremony. ♀'s relatives often stay for some time longer in ♂'s house, but gradually go home as they think fit.

That night ♂ and ♀ sleep together.

It is customary to compel the ♀'s relatives to hoard the goods which they have received from ♂'s relatives as "food

555 schooled. They grow up in the open environment of the
[561] house, absorbing most of their lore by watching and imitat-
ing them by actual instruction. Their care devolves chiefly
[556] on the mother, although at any ceremony the father will be seen arriving with the baby in his arms, while his wife leads another child. Nurses are unknown and the parents take their children with them on all occasions; if it is necessary for a mother to be absent on some arduous toil, her child will be entrusted to a grandmother or other elderly relative.
606 There are no avoidances between the young people and their parents-in-law.

607 The obligation of present-giving does not stop with the marriage ceremony. Whenever X gives a burial feast or other
451 ceremony, Y's relatives are expected to contribute. It is felt that the weight of the presents given them during the period of engagement and at the wedding has become too heavy, and they throw this off by lavish giving. No count is kept of the value of gifts bestowed or received, though it is known that the family of the woman loses financially in the end. The father of many daughters is regarded as an unfortunate individual, who is always poor and overworked through the necessity of
[558] providing for them. By so doing, however, he increases his own prestige, and the Bella Coola have the happy sentiment that such a man manages to get along some way, perhaps necessity rouses his ambition. Likewise X's relatives contribute to any ritual carried out by Y's father. If, for example, one of his wife's relatives dies, X and his friends may wish to contribute towards the funeral expenses. In fact, any cere-
[556] monial serves as an excuse for relatives by marriage to donate goods and thus demonstrate publicly their influence, importance, and generosity.

608 The concept of mutual help between families who have
476 intermarried is one that lasts for generations. In 1922 there was in Bella Coola an old Kimsquit man who had left home some forty years earlier and had since lived in Smith Inlet where he married and had a boy. On the death of his wife, this

[illegible]

[illegible]

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old man came back to Bella Coola with his son, a man about twenty-five years of age. During his absence all his relatives had died, and he was forgotten. He went to the house of a man with whom his ancestors had intermarried generations ago, explained who he was, and was welcomed. The old man and his son have since lived there, although it is doubtful if the owner of the house had ever heard of their existence, and the son cannot even speak the Bella Coola language.

♂ and ♀ themselves are not entirely overlooked in the exchange of presents between their own families. If ♀'s father is well pleased with his son-in-law he may show this not only publicly, which redounds to his own credit, but by the communication of secret lore such as a special number of nights for ceremonial chastity. Conversely, if ♀ should not be a dancer, her father-in-law often asks her father's permission to make her a member of that society. The woman's father is naturally pleased and makes no objections, so she is initiated, using a name and prerogative embodied in her husband's family. Commonly too, they give her one of their ancestral names at any convenient ceremony later than the wedding. In conformity with the rules already explained, if ♀ should die childless the names return to ♂'s relatives, but if there are children they pass to them. It is said that crest names can never be transferred in this manner.

♀'s father and other relatives continue to take an interest in her ceremonial welfare and in her personal comfort. If ♂ beats or otherwise abuses her, they expostulate, and if his cruelty becomes unbearable they shelter their daughter when she runs away from her husband. If ♂ should murder ♀ she would be revenged by her family. Only one instance of this was known, when the murderer avoided his pursuers by fleeing from the country. As a rule a wife is fairly well treated, though this depends on the character of the husband, the importance of her relatives, and the amount of goods expended to validate the marriage. Among slaves and persons of no influence, it is assumed that a husband may sell his wife as a slave, and this is believed to have occurred on one occasion to the daughter of a chief.

Once, some hundred years ago, the daughter of a Bella Coola chief was married to the son of [illegible]

A husband demands faithfulness on the part of his wife, though he himself is often rather lax. [illegible] as a great one regarded as amusing. In recent years, however, some husbands have made a practice of renting their wives to white men. This is not considered creditable, but the Bella Coola do not strongly condemn breaches of the moral code, which are regarded as the affair of the husband alone. There is said to be a Bella Bella custom by which a wife takes as recognized paramour one of the friends of her husband who is thought not only to know of this but to receive the presents which the lover gives his wife. The two continue to be friends and often hunt together; in fact, their mutual interest in the woman is a bond between them. No trace of this practice could be found in Bella Coola.

POLYGAMY

It has thus far been assumed that the Bella Coola are monogamous, an assumption correct only since the period of white dominance. Previous to that time it was quite common for wealthy men to have three, four, or more wives. Pukia, the important chief so often mentioned, had nine, ten, or eleven, the exact number is not known. A man wishing to take a second wife could do so in the manner already described, although the period of engagement was usually much shorter, and working for the parents-in-law was not expected. The reason for this was obvious to the Bella Coola. None but a chief of importance could afford more than a single wife, and such an one could not be expected to demean himself by working for anyone else. Besides, parents were glad to have their daughters married to a great chief, so willingly omitted the customary period of servitude. Few attained the distinction of having several wives. As far as could be learnt, the number of the sexes seems always to have been almost equal, in itself a check to polygamy in a community where practically every adult had a wife. A number of males were always there to wed, and it is to be assumed that polygamy was made possible only through the surplus of women thus caused. The great majority of men had a single wife, some chiefs had

with the others, including the one who had just been leader, as followers. It is said that there was rarely friction among the joint husbands, since each realized that his turn would come as head of the household, and meanwhile the wife endeavoured to share her favours indiscriminately. The children were considered equally the offspring of each husband, thus automatically acquiring membership in several ancestral families. Such were regarded as indeed fortunate, provided with every potential means of assistance in the struggle of life. 595 596 [595]

Recognizing its importance, every effort was made to verify this information. Further questioning elicited the statements that the informant had never seen a case of this, though he asserted that when a young man he had often heard of it and that the custom had then only recently died out. Another old man and an elderly woman confirmed the above statements almost word for word, and each added that it was well known when they were young, though they had never actually seen it in practice. One man believed that the custom had formerly prevailed in several parts of the coast, and said that he had heard of its occurrence among the "[illegible]" people near [illegible]. Considering the reliability of his informants, the writer gives as his personal belief that the institution of polyandry among the daughters of chiefs occurred in Bella Coola not many years ago. Knowledge of the term of address for co-husband, already given, is strong evidence in support of this view. 128 595 596

[illegible]

Since it has been assumed that Y is the daughter of a chief, properly married with due formality, it is necessary to digress still further from the account of her relations with X to describe connections of a less creditable nature. The most common of these was with slaves. Though frowned upon by all Bella Coola ethics, such alliances, of a permanent nature, do not appear to have been rare. In some cases it was a man who thus demeaned himself, in some a woman. Since no slave could provide the goods necessary for an elaborate wedding, the 567 588

587 ceremony usually consisted simply of the man and woman
588 living together. In theory, this prevented the children from ever obtaining a name or other prerogative embodied in the ancestral myth of the free-born parent, and an effort was always made to conceal from them the details of the ancestral family's origin myth. But, as already described in the section dealing with slaves, the expenditure of valuable presents served to eradicate, or at least to cover, the blot. If the child
[556] succeeded in giving many potlatches, the stain was generally forgotten. On the other hand, if the child of a slave married to a free man was not "washed," he could always be shamed by a reminder of the disgrace of his parents' wedding.

586 In case of murder, the son or other near relative of the
[587] victim sometimes accepts a daughter or other member of the
[224] offender's family instead of exacting blood revenge. The bride is delivered to her husband with valuable goods "to wash away the blood," but these never suffice entirely to remove the disgrace from her or her children. The latter may inherit names and prerogatives from their father, but even if they attain to the position of chiefs, they can always be put to shame by reference to their mother's marriage as an atonement for murder. Of course the influence of a great chief makes it impolitic to refer to his ancestry, and there are a few instances of men having reached such a position of eminence that the blot
[584] has been practically forgotten. The wife's family must continue to give presents to the husband for years after marriage, otherwise her lot is unenviable indeed, and her children have the status of the unwashed offspring of a slave and a free man. In some cases a marriage of this type is entered upon years after a murder, if a son or other descendant wishes to end the anxiety of constantly expecting blood revenge.

REPURCHASE OF THE WIFE

586 Repurchase of a wife is the necessary consequence of every
585 reputable Bella Coola marriage. It is asserted that the pre-

ments given by X's relatives up to the time of the wedding have exceeded in value those which they have received. Later, whenever, and as often as X gives a potlatch, Y's relatives are expected to rebuy her from her husband. Although this is the expression used by the Bella Coola, it has only a ceremonial significance, since Y remains X's wife. 556 513

Whenever X intimates that he is going to give a potlatch, Y and her relatives begin to hoard goods irrespective of whether or not children have been born. Their value is unregulated by custom, although the individuals concerned always try to give as much as they can; usually X does not know exactly how much will be provided until their actual delivery. Moreover, this is the occasion most preferred by the relatives of a wife to present to her husband ancestral names or other prerogatives embodied in origin myths. The exact rights of X with respect to such gifts have already been defined so need not be repeated here. Even if Y has taken an ancient name to her husband when she was married, she may bring him another when repurchased. This is an event of even greater importance to a woman than marriage, so no effort is spared to add to the dignity of the occasion.

On the second night of a potlatch Y's father announces what prerogatives he proposes to grant to X. These may include the right to a certain totem-pole design, the carving of a spoon, a painting for the wall of the house, or any other element embodied in the origin myth. These privileges are displayed by X at the coming potlatch. If, as is usual, Y's father wishes to give his son-in-law an ancestral name, it is announced on this occasion, and is the designation by which X is known during the ceremony. It is always said that such a name is so "heavy," in the sense of "so important" that it must be "dragged across" to her husband by Y. *Kusiut* names are commonly transferred as presents, but without any public bestowal, and one or two instances are known of the similar acquisition of sisaok prerogatives and whistles; it was in this way that *Potlas* was able to import sisaok ritual from Bella Bella. After announcing the 426 556 513 [553]

556 prerogatives he is transmitting, Y's father usually takes the
563 opportunity of stating that he wishes to hunt on X's hunting-grounds,
[425] or fish in his fishing-grounds. Permission is never refused, though it is only for the period of the potlatch. Since Y's father is to assist X, it is considered fitting to grant him facilities for obtaining pelts and food.

It is on the afternoon of the second day of the potlatch that the goods are delivered. They serve six purposes, which can be described separately, although the Bella Coola usually think of them as being too closely associated for division.

(1) They increase the dignity, influence, and prestige of the donors. This theme needs no further elaboration. When X later gives these presents to his foreign guests, he announces the person from whom he has received them and in this way knowledge of the manner in which Y's relatives have upheld the dignity of the marriage is spread far and wide, to their intense gratification.

(2) They help X to rise to a position of influence in the community by the credit which comes to him from their later distribution. Though a man may acquire goods in various ways, the Bella Coola affirm that without contributions from his wife's relatives no man can become a chief.

(3) They validate the transmission of names, or other prerogatives, taken by Y to her husband. Even presents given
[606] directly from father-in-law to son-in-law are always said to have been taken by the daughter to her husband.

(4) Indirectly, they increase the prestige of the children,
[554] either born at that time or who may appear later. None of the goods used for repurchasing their mother can actually be used for their benefit, but the whole rite gives them strength to succeed in life. A child whose mother has not been repurchased is said to be unable to walk, as if his legs were powerless; he lacks intelligence, and the ability to prosper. From the
[578] petty quarrels of childhood until old age, a person is proud to recall the number of times his mother was rebought, and to thrust this statement in the teeth of those less fortunate.

(5) They govern Y's status in this world. When women quarrel, as they often do, the most common boast to shame a less wealthy rival is a reminder of the number of times the speaker was repurchased and the value of the goods used. 556 583 [578]

"I can sit down on fifteen canoes," or "I am carried by five slaves," says the angry woman, mentioning whatever goods were used for her repurchase.

(6) Finally, these goods serve a more definite purpose in obtaining for Y a name, or names, of which the value is directly proportionate to the expenditure, precisely as the importance of a chief's designation depends on the goods used to validate it. [553]

As with men's names, some women's appellations were given by *Alquntäm* to the first arrivals; others were created on this earth with regard to peculiar events, and still others are names which can be used either by men or women. Theoretically, the dignity of the first type of name is greater than either of the others, but in practice the importance of the owner depends on the number of times she has bought herself from her husband; the principles governing the rank of women are thus the same as those already described for men. The term *yatsak*, applied to a woman who has many times rebought herself and so reached a position of eminence, is the feminine equivalent to *staltmc*. The creation of women's names in reference to personal characteristics or incidents connected with their married life is more common than similar creations for men. The ritual of the bestowal of a name on Y, here given, was omitted from the description of the potlatch in order to lessen the complexity of that ceremony. It will be remembered that on the afternoon of the second day of the potlatch Y's relatives appear outside X's house, carrying valuable presents. 551 556 583 [554] [562] 553 556 583

The announcer calls out that Y's father has come to give "food" to X and his relatives. By food, presents are meant, which are the return, with interest, of the gifts given by X's relatives on various occasions. The giver is announced, for other relatives than Y's father contribute, and to whom the

553 556 583 present is made. The recipient may either be X himself or one of his relatives who has conferred a gift on one of Y's family. The goods are taken inside, counted, displayed, and the same announcement made. These presents are given away by X the same evening, so that the only practical advantage that he receives is that the ultimate recipients make their returns, if any, to him. He makes no recompense to Y's relatives for these.

[537] A fluent orator next speaks on behalf of Y's father to the following effect:

"Please, ye people, listen to my words. This is an important occasion, hearken to what I have to say. Long ago our first ancestors were married, as X and Y have been, and it is fitting that we should make the name . . . . . . live again in Y. Three years [or as long as the name has been dormant] it has been dead, as if living with the ghosts beneath the earth. Now it shall stand up again in Y; henceforth we use it for her. Come forth . . . . . . [using Y's new name], your father rebuys you from X for fifty blankets [for example]."

Y may be anywhere; the statement "come forth" is merely symbolical. The fifty blankets are piled outside the house and the spectators, of whom many have gathered to witness the transaction, know that that number of blankets has been given with reference to that name. In some cases the wife is rebought three, four, or even more times for one name, either repeatedly by her father, or successively by her father and other relatives, or several names may be acquired by the different repurchasings. For instance, at one potlatch not many years ago a woman obtained the names *Łäliäks*, *Xwalbon*, *Smaien·a*, and *Ailsamka*. As with men, some women prefer to have one very strong name, rather than diffuse their importance over a number. In this particular case the four designations were received from different relatives. At each repurchase the call is raised:

"Come forth . . . . . . your brother [uncle, or whatever relative it may be] rebuys you from X for . . . . . ."

In one case where an orphan woman, without relatives, repurchased herself by her own arduous labours, the announcement was made: 553 556 553

"Y's belt has come to rebuy her."

The reference was to the manner in which she had looped up her clothing with a belt when working. If Y's father should die after amassing goods to repurchase her, they are used for the purpose intended and the announcement is:

"Y's father's arms has come to rebuy her."

The ancestral family descended from the first settlers at *Snutli·ɬ* have the prerogative of singing a special song as they rebuy one of their daughters. This was used by their first ancestors on a like occasion. The theme is: [124] [553]

"I, I, I am the highest of you all. No one of you is capable of doing what I can accomplish. You all live on what I void."

The significance of this last sentence is that the village of *Snutli·ɬ* is farthest up the Bella Coola River. Its inhabitants used to claim that the people of the other villages lived on the refuse which they threw into the river, a source of pride to them. [186]

After announcing the various relatives who have rebought Y, the presents are counted and carried into X's house. The statement concerning their number, who has given them, and for what purpose, is repeated to the foreign guests there assembled, and they are then piled indiscriminately in a large heap for future distribution. At this juncture X calls out:

"Come in, come in," as though he were welcoming arrivals from a distance.

Y's relatives enter, and the ritual of the potlatch continues in the manner already described. The origin myth in which Y's new name is embodied is related in considerable detail, especially its recent history, that is, by whom it was last used and any pertinent items connected with its transmission. If she has received several names from different myths, each is similarly expounded.

As has been said, many women's names have been created 551 553

551 [953] with respect to their appearance or actions on this earth. So far as could be learnt, the procedure of bestowal is identical with that just described. The following examples illustrate designations of this type:

[773] *Ankoalánúsimúits*, "The Resident Mother." In the beginning of time the wife of *Tatalmaix* had twins so often that the village rapidly increased in population. Accordingly she took this name for herself when she rebought herself from her husband. It was transmitted for generations in the ancestral family of *Tatalmaix*'s descendants until lost about one hundred years ago. The recipients claimed it as their own and passed it to a certain *Onqwmdilda*, recently deceased, who gave it to her brother's daughter at the time of her marriage. Since this woman's husband has not yet given a potlatch the name is accordingly in a degraded condition at the present time (1923).

551 578 606 *Gilixpaiyo*, "I Am the Worthless One." The mother-in-law of this woman had been in the habit of insulting her daughter-in-law by saying, even when strangers were present:

"We have a worthless daughter-in-law."

On rebuying herself the woman advertised the rudeness of her husband's mother by throwing her words back in her teeth.

Nulululuks, "I Am the One Whose Eyes Are Hungry." The mother-in-law of this woman used to eat without offering food to her son's wife.

Nakulnwandjits, "The One Whose Haunches Are Dusty." Her mother-in-law did not give her a place to sit in the house so that she was forced to stay close to the fire in the ashes.

Kwiltalais, "The One Who Sits Where There Is No Space." Her mother-in-law objected to this woman sitting near her husband when he took his ceremonial seat, and insulted her with the above remark.

551 578 *Nusnanc'as*, "The Stingy One." It was said that this woman restrained her husband's generosity until he gained an unpleasant reputation for parsimony. She publicly shamed

her husband's station by taking this name for herself when she rebought herself from him.

[illegible], "The Inhospitable One." Her husband received this appellation owing to his wife's manners, as she advertised what had been said about him.

[illegible], "Wilfully Deaf." This woman's mother-in-law claimed that she deliberately failed to hear what she was told to do, and applied the above epithet to her. The daughter-in-law confounded her by taking it as her own name.

When a name of this type is assumed it is always announced when, where, and for what purpose it was first created.

A description has already been given of the actual ritual by which X borrows the goods acquired from the repurchase of Y, but it is necessary to enlarge on the prohibition against their use for the direct benefit of one of the children of the couple. The theory is that the goods bind the marriage contract and express in a practical and lofty form the kindly sentiments with which Y's relatives regard her husband, and the bond between the two families, hence they must be used solely for the benefit of him and his relatives. A man usually applies these goods to initiate the children of his brothers or sisters into the ranks of the *[illegible]* or dancers. It is unthinkable for goods to be delivered without an exposition of Y's family's glories, but if this should ever take place, there would be no difficulty in applying them to the direct benefit of her children. When used, for example, to make a child of X's brother a *[illegible]*, he is a living testimony of the noble way in which Y's relatives have done that which is fitting for the family of her husband. Due to accidents in announcing and storing of presents, it sometimes happens that those obtained by the repurchasing of Y are used for the benefit of her own children. [557] Unless this error is corrected, the child could always be shamed by having it said:

"You are a mere nobody. The goods expended in the repurchase of your mother have become nothing beneath your feet."

When such an accident occurs, the relatives of X take some future occasion to give presents to validate his child, with the announcement:

"The goods used from the repurchase of his mother have become nothing beneath his feet. We hereby supply that deficiency."

Thus it is demonstrated that the relatives of both parents are interested in his welfare, so that his path is clear before him.

Many women are only repurchased once, but an effort is made to do this frequently since the more times, the greater her prestige. After several repurchasings it is felt that the names and other prerogatives "dragged across" by Y have become valueless. But since new names have been taken to her husband on each occasion, the marks of friendship between the two families are still plain. Thus it is that those first transferred can be revived by relatives of Y, unless, of course, X has validated them for his children. If there is only one repurchasing, the names remain the definite property of X. This is not a clearly formulated law, merely a sentiment that the earlier names have been covered by those later given, and that accordingly Y's relatives, having done what was proper, can now use the titles once more. There is a constant interchange of names and privileges between families related by marriage.

It is virtually impossible to over-estimate the importance of this rite of repurchase among the Bella Coola, one of the few customs preserved tenaciously amid the ruins of their ancient culture. The writer was forcibly struck with the following instance which occurred while he was in Bella Coola:

About fifteen years before, a young man and woman had married with due formality. After three children had been born, the mother took to drink and vice until her husband at last repudiated her, retaining possession of the children. The woman, weakened by disease, divorced by her husband, and looked upon with contempt by her family, was yet determined that nothing she had done should ruin her children's chances in life. Accordingly she donated $300 to her ex-husband to redeem herself. Marriage is accepted as a matter of course, but to be many times repurchased is the goal of every ambitious woman. In *Talio* the custom prevails of depicting on the house the number of coppers paid for repurchasing a wife. Thus her fame is displayed to all. 556 583 [184] [593]

It is somewhat difficult for a white man to realize what a privilege the family of a wife considers it to repurchase her from her husband. If the latter is unwilling to give a potlatch, his relatives-in-law may urge him to do so, and if he still declines to exert himself they take the drastic step of inviting their fellow-villagers to assemble in his house where, with these guests as witnesses, the wife's relatives give presents to her husband and his relations. They may make this presentation at any gathering where they are assured of a large audience. By so doing the donors have demonstrated their proper sentiments, in spite of the inertness of the husband.

The assistance which the relatives of a wife have given her husband is a matter about which they can boast for the rest of their lives, a fact impressed upon the writer by listening to a quarrel between two Bella Coola men. One of them owned a horse and waggon which the other had hired to move some goods. The latter became very angry, claiming that the former had overcharged him and must be poor and greedy to be so eager to acquire money. The teamster, thus deeply insulted, silenced the other man by reminding him that the only reason he was wealthy was by means of the goods used to repurchase his, the teamster's, sister from her husband, brother of the man with whom he was disputing. To the observer the dispute was made more interesting by the fact that both the husband and wife had been dead for at least fifteen years, but their families had not ceased to remember the financial obligations connected with the marriage. 556 588 578

556 583 578 602 A man who is giving a ceremony of any kind can offer few greater insults to his wife's relatives than omission to ask their assistance. The following is a good instance of such an insult:

About 1900 a man and woman were married and had three children. Then the mother died, before being repurchased from her husband. In addition, the husband had assisted his wife's father when one of the younger children had died, so that it was most fitting that the wife's relatives should contribute to any ceremony given by the husband. Four years later the husband proposed to marry once more, and to have the wedding occur at a potlatch. But on the day of ceremony, he insulted the relatives of his dead wife by failing to invite them. The cause of the feud was not disclosed, but the husband increased it by again failing to invite her family when, during the potlatch, they should have rebought her for the benefit of his young relatives about to be initiated into the ranks of the kusiut. The father of the dead woman came forward uninvited with a large present for each, saying in effect:

"I, too, have a right to contribute to add prestige to my daughter and her children."

In this way he defeated the wiles of his son-in-law who had hoped to shame his father-in-law by the failure of the latter to contribute to his potlatch. The son-in-law endeavoured to excuse himself by saying that his late wife's relatives had not assisted for so long that he thought they would not wish to do so. This retort further incensed the father of the dead woman so that next day he and his wife publicly gave the donor of the potlatch $300 "to make clean where we sit."

This somewhat lengthy description has been necessary to explain the important part which the repurchase of wives plays in the lives of the Bella Coola; it is one of the fundamentals of society and is, therefore, worthy of attention.

DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE

968 [596] Either death or divorce can terminate marriage. The decease of a wife is an unfortunate affair, quite apart from the grief which it may cause her husband. Two families have been brought into peculiarly close relations through her, and now the bond itself has snapped; delicate financial arrangements have been undertaken, and it is not easy to settle these without ill-feeling, particularly if the alliance was a return marriage. If no child has been born, and no repurchasing of the wife

married one, her relatives are expected to return to her husband's family the goods received during the engagement and at the wedding. The matter is then settled. If the deceased has a younger sister, cousin, or other near relative, an effort is usually made to have this individual replace the dead wife.[9] No further goods are given, except perhaps a few to add dignity to the transference; the new wife merely replaces her dead sister and the bond between the two families continues unbroken. If the husband should die, his wife's relatives are considered honourable and endowed with the minds of chiefs if they return to his relatives the presents which they have received. But if the wife can be remarried to one of his relatives, there is no need for this and the two families continue to enjoy the mutual strength acquired by the long period of engagement and exchange of benefits and presents. 768 587 768

If death takes place after the repurchasing of the wife, there is no need to return presents, since the rebuying has cancelled the expenditure by the husband. If children have been born and the woman has long become practically a member of her husband's family, she is buried by them as a matter of course, but should she die soon after marriage, her own family usually performs the obsequies. 768 [764]

With the passing of many years of married life, the repurchasing several times of the woman, and the birth of children, she becomes so much a member of her husband's family that his death seldom ends the arrangement. The widow is by no means a slave and usually is mistress of her own destiny, especially if she has children and has reached a position of eminence in the community. Since the desirability of preserving the bond between the two families is fully realized, it is accordingly customary for a widow to wed her husband's brother, or a husband his deceased wife's sister. But in each case the ritual of marriage and exchange of presents must be [736] 587

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[9] The native term emphasizes the fact that the new wife is virtually inherited by her husband.

[illegible]

[illegible]

58f carried out in toto, since the cross-feasting has wiped out the original expenditure. This is not customary in the case of elderly widows or widowers. It is considered fitting for a widow or widower to wait for at least six months before remarrying. The Bella Coola say that in Bella Bella wives are willed, as if they were slaves. [16.]

58g In spite of the efforts made to ensure the stability of marriage by elaborate ceremonies and repeated exchanges of presents by the two families, divorce is not unknown. Due to the decay of Bella Coola culture, it is now the rule and not the exception. It was difficult to obtain satisfactory data concerning its prevalence in the old days. Unquestionably every effort was made by both families to keep together a husband and wife who had been wed with due ceremony, but it is evident that these attempts were not always successful. If a husband deserts his wife, or she him, and refuses to return, it is considered that the marriage contract is at an end. The usual grounds for desertion on his part are childlessness, inability of the wife to help in potlatches, and habitual faithlessness. Continued cruelty and neglect are the usual reasons for a woman abandoning her husband. These factors seem to have governed divorce in years gone by, as well as at the present time. The most unfortunate consequence, in the eyes of the Bella Coola, is the stigma it casts on the children. The younger ones normally remain with the mother, those older use their own discretion, and sometimes pass back and forth from one parent to the other. Both mother and father continue to take an interest in their welfare, and a child can receive prerogatives from either, irrespective of which he is living with. None the less, there is a sentimental bar against the children of a divorced couple who can be shamed by a reference to the marital faithlessness of a parent. This factor, combined with the difficulties, financial and otherwise, between the two families, explains the efforts made to prevent divorce and the odium with which it is regarded. Of course, if husband and wife are poor persons or slaves, married without elaborate

[illegible]

[illegible]

ceremony, they can part at discretion without anyone being affected. 586

When a wife runs away and seeks refuge with another man, her husband sometimes tries to kill his rival, but frequently both families endeavour to heal the breach amicably. Some of her relatives, particularly those who played an influential part in the marriage, first ask the husband whether or not he is willing to take her back. If the answer is in the affirmative, they next try to persuade her to return. Every argument is used, in many cases combined with threats against her seducer, and the intermediaries often succeed. But she must never go back without presents, "to dry with fire the water that has covered the marriage." The husband invites all his fellow-villagers to his house to a ceremony which is said "to [illegible] the house [of conflict]." The singers are in attendance and sing in succession many [illegible] songs, followed by sacred songs, and to which the owner of the song dances, but since the supernatural beings are not present, the affair is of a non-sacred nature. The goods received from the family of the erring wife are distributed and the matter is at an end. Those who persuaded the wife to return are especially rewarded. 897 6 [796] [591]

If the faithless wife should refuse to return, or if she should bear a child to her lover, reconciliation is not possible. Then it is incumbent on the woman's relatives to return to the husband as much goods as he has expended, with additions if they wish to uphold their own reputation. If the husband is clearly to blame, or if he is the deserting partner, his wife's family are not required to return the gifts they have received. There is no judicial tribunal of any kind, the force of public opinion alone impels restitution if the offender wishes to maintain his reputation in the community. Acting on this principle, the relatives of a deserted wife sometimes return to her husband's family the presents they have received, thereby demonstrating their nobility and at the same time shaming the offender. 576 897 [626]

Formerly there was an elaborate ceremony to shame the [796] [626]

[illegible]

[illegible]

husband or wife who destroyed a marriage by deserting him, or her, partner for a lover. One informant, aged about seventy, twice took part in this as when a young man, but probably did not know the full details of it. He stated that it followed a divorce of two persons who had been married with full ceremony, whereas another, slightly younger informant, who remembered having seen the ceremony once when a mere lad, believed that it was only in the families of commoners. It appears certain that the rite has not been practised since about [illegible], consequently there is an element of doubt as to the actual details, and even as to whether it was an affair of chiefs or commoners. It is probable that it was among the former.

When a woman deserted her husband one of the leading chiefs would take this opportunity of giving a ceremony of the type known as [illegible]. After consulting with his fellows to ensure that no one had any objections, and rarely including the deserted husband, he summoned the singers to his house. He would tell them his plans, and they would prepare the songs for the occasion. Five or six were always composed, with an effort to include as many foul remarks and allusions as possible, particularly with regard to the organs of the woman and her lover.

The singers spent about a week composing the songs, and meanwhile the chief who was giving the ceremony prepared food and made other necessary arrangements. When these were ready, the donor invited to his house all the members of the *sisaok* and *kusiut* societies for a rehearsal. The singers sang over the airs for the instruction of the guests. They were always worded as if it were the deserted husband speaking in foul terms of his ex-wife. The theme of one was:

"My wife has pudenda like those of a black bear."

The guests joined in the singing and also supplied foul themes by calling out observations about the organs of women in general, and of the deserting wife in particular. The singers

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The relation of this to the s'ulk dance of the same name is obscure, cf. I, p. 279.

tried to incorporate as many of these as possible, so that the rite soon became a chorus of obscenities. The songs were sung and resung until all present were familiar with them, then the donor of the rite distributed food and all departed. [illegible]

The following afternoon everyone, including those uninitiated into either society, were invited to the donor's house. Probably the only absentees from the village were the deserting wife and her lover, while guests from neighbouring settlements were often in attendance. On this occasion, for the first time, the deserted husband used to take the leading part. When the singers struck up the tune of the first song, he used to appear, supported by four or five assistants. His face was blackened with soot, he wore a lynx-skin belt, and above his head was fashioned some insulting object, usually a representation of the female organs made of wood, cedar-bark and berries, as realistic as possible. As the singers sang, aided by those who had learnt the songs on the previous day, the husband danced, moving his body so that the ornament on top of his head was shaken suggestively. Meanwhile the spectators kept calling out filthy epithets of any kind on his ex-wife and her lover. Sometimes the dancer was able to insert some obscene remarks into the display. On one occasion, for example, he pulled some lynx fur from his belt and threw it in the face of a *Tāl·io* man who happened to be present, and who had once seduced a married woman and accordingly been the butt of a similar rite, with the remark:

"All *Tāl·io* women have hairy pudenda like that."

The guests were invited to suggest foul nick-names for the man with whom the dancer's wife had eloped. One of these was adopted by general agreement of opinion, and the man was commonly called by it henceforth. Two names so created were: [551]

Skulsns, "The One Whose Face is Wrinkled like a Woman's Organs," and,

Emolsaik, "The One Who Cohabited Publicly."

586 One very old man is still, 1923, commonly called by this
626 last designation, much to his annoyance.

When the songs had been sung, each accompanied by the
831 dancing of the deserted husband, the donor of the ceremony
776 distributed food and the guests departed. The only advantage
to the giver of the rite was that it enabled him to show his
[556] wealth in an apparently disinterested fashion by gifts of food. Usually he was a friend of the aggrieved husband.

When a husband deserted his wife, the other women of the village used to perform an exactly similar ceremony. The same type of songs were composed, and during their singing
the deserted wife used to dance, wearing above her head
[292] representations of a penis and testicles. By means of hidden strings she was able to cause the former to become erect.

On other occasions the ceremony was varied by an announcer asking the offended party about the appearance of the deserter. There followed a minute and highly coloured description about the unpleasantness of his genital organs, a description which was swiftly incorporated into the songs.

It can be taken as a matter of course that the above description is little more than an outline of the Bella Coola ceremony of shaming. In spite of its deficiencies, it is important, as evidence of the former sentiment with regard to divorce. Obscene though the ceremony must have been, both in acting and in the free use of personalities, it must have been a powerful deterrent to divorce.[20] Indeed it would be difficult to imagine a stronger one in a community where a man's position is judged by public opinion and where his greatest aversion is to public ridicule. It is unfortunate that we shall probably never know whether the rite was associated with chiefs or commoners.

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CEREMONIAL MARRIAGE

556 Since marriage gains much of its importance from the complicated business transactions between the two families, with

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[20] A similar rite was occasionally carried out for unmarried mothers.

[illegible]
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the sexual side neglected, it is perhaps not surprising that the Bella Coola carry out a ceremonial form entirely disassociated from marital rights. It is believed that such ceremonial marriages were performed by the first inhabitants of this earth, and that they have been customary ever since. A careful father or uncle always endeavours to arrange such a rite for a girl when she is two or three years of age. Her relatives decide on some influential chief whom they would like to have as their daughter's fictitious husband, considering his wealth and prestige, but not his age. They interview the proposed bridegroom, who may consult his wife or other relatives before accepting, although he rarely refuses, as that would be an insult to the petitioners as well as a financial loss to himself. No period of engagement is necessary, as the wedding is arranged for the near future. Among important chiefs the ritual is identical with that of real marriage, though usually it is somewhat curtailed. The relatives of the bride welcome her husband and his relatives in their house and receive from him rather larger presents than they give; the same remark is made about it being the proper time to take the bride to her new home, and the husband and his party depart, without the girl. Presents of names or prerogatives may likewise be transmitted. The two are now considered as married, although there is no necessity for husband and wife even to see one another; on the other hand, there is no reason for avoidance since the marriage is essentially a business affair and not a sexual one. Whenever the husband gives a potlatch or other ceremony, he is assisted by the relatives of his fictitious wife, sometimes to a greater extent than by the relatives of his real one. This ceremonial wedlock may last for three or four years, until the relatives of the wife rebuy her from her husband. On this occasion it is essential that he receive from the relations of his fictitious wife presents of greater value than he himself has given, otherwise she would be disgraced. Ceremonial marriage differs from real marriage in that one repurchasing terminates

[571] [556] is, although it is customary for the parents of a wife to exhibit their wealth on several occasions.

What are the advantages of such an agreement to the two parties? The husband receives considerable recompense, both in actual goods and in ceremonial prerogatives. Moreover, his vanity is gratified by the desire shown by others to have him as husband of their daughters. The advantages to the wife are more difficult to describe. Financially, her relatives always lose, yet they consider that the prestige gained by their daughter as wife of a mighty chief fully compensates for their monetary loss. Accordingly, they take pains to have a daughter married several times before puberty, either simultaneously or [575] in succession. Thus there is a form of ceremonial polyandry existing in Bella Coola at the present day. No ceremonial marriage takes place after puberty. In later years, when the [554] wife grows up, marries, and has children of her own, their status is increased materially by the pre-puberty marriages of their mother. They address her fictitious husband as "father," and his children as brother or sister, although there are no incest prohibitions with regard to them. A chief sometimes arranges the bestowal of names or other prerogatives on the children of a fictitious ex-wife, but such favours are too uncertain to provide a motive for the prevalence of the rite. Its value rests on the esteem attached to a woman whose relatives have shown their wealth and prowess by marrying her several times. When her children quarrel with their playfellows, it is common to hear one boast:

"*I* have three fathers. How many have you?"

[558] Occasionally the relatives of a fictitious bride are unable to provide the goods to repurchase her from her husband and the girl remains disgraced for life. In no circumstances has her husband any claims to marital rights with her, and in due course she can marry someone else; but it is never forgotten that she was *not* rebought from her husband. In 1916 a girl about four years of age was married to a man of sixty, who at the time gave her relatives $80 and a motor boat. She had

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not yet been consummated in 1924 and the Bella Coola were beginning to look askance at her. It is doubtful whether the child realized that she was married, certainly the fact had not the slightest effect on her behaviour. Unless the wife is rebought, any canoes which she took to her husband at her fictitious marriage remain his property.

Ceremonial marriages are sometimes carried out for special reasons. If the husband in a real marriage feels that he is over-indebted to his wife's relatives through the canoes and prerogatives they have brought him, he sometimes arranges to return some of them and thus even the transaction by ceremonially marrying one of his young female relatives to one of his wife's family. She takes back some of the acquired names to her fictitious husband and the matter is amicably arranged. Realizing the difficulties experienced by the father of many daughters, one of his sons-in-law may, if his father-in-law has many times rebought his daughter and so demonstrated his nobility, try to arrange a fictitious marriage between the old man and one of his son-in-law's relatives. It often happens that the proud old chief will decline such assistance, confident in his own ability and prestige. Revenge is often settled by a fictitious marriage, arranged in the same manner and with the same attached stigma as that already described. Sometimes the infant is ceremonially married to the son of a chief, instead of to the chief himself, though no true wedlock follows.

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It is not even necessary to have a small girl to act as bride. If a man wishes to ally himself by marriage to a famous chief, and lacks a daughter, he can perform the marriage rite with a "bride" consisting of his finger, leg, hand, or other part of the body. In a case in 1923 the "wife" was a favourite dog, which was duly married to a chief. In fact, ceremonial marriage is merely one of the many methods used by the Bella Coola to enter into financial dealings with an influential chief; it provides an honourable means of displaying the wealth of the bride's family; it increases the prestige of a girl and her relatives, or the prestige of her relatives alone if "she" is an inani-

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588 mate object. Bella Coola financiers are always seeking to
596 arrange such undertakings; the potlatch is the culminating
point, but the same principle pervades their whole life.

It is to the advantage of the intending donor of a potlatch to become the fictitious husband of as many children as possible. Accordingly he sometimes take the initial step, as is customary for the relatives of the husband in real marriage, but not in ceremonial. In such a case it is necessary for him to offer some inducement, perhaps in the form of one of the few women's names brought to earth in the beginning of time. He approaches a suitable father-in-law, suggesting that at a fictitious marriage he would be willing to give his wife a noble woman's name. If this is agreeable, the rite is carried out accordingly. The wife is in many cases a son of the person to
[551] whom the proposal was made; he duly receives a woman's name, the only circumstance under which this is possible. The actual designation will probably be returned through many repurchasings, but the boy has reached an enviable position. In later years he can always silence a person with whom he is quarrelling by saying:

"I need not answer you. You cannot even approach my body, so thickly am I padded with the goods which my father used when he rebought me."

556 Another business transaction of a similar nature is the
608 giving of a small infant to an old person to "hold." This ap-
858 pears to be uncommon, and the only instance about which information was available occurred under the following circumstances:

A man and a woman were married with full ceremony and the best of feelings prevailed between the two families. The wife was several times rebought until she and her relatives had fully maintained their dignity, in fact the relations of the husband felt that they were being out-shone. Then the wife's father died. To mark their sympathy, the husband's family gave the widow one of her daughter's children to "hold." Valuable non-returnable presents were transmitted as "soft blankets" for the child. The advantages to the donors were that they had an opportunity of showing their dignity, and it would always be a mark of pride for the child to be able to boast of the way in which she had been "held." 556 608 158

Ceremonial marriage clearly demonstrates two strong Bella Coola characteristics; namely, the desire publicly to enter into financial undertakings to demonstrate the wealth of the contracting party, and the desire to increase the prestige of children by means of this wealth expended indirectly on their behalf.

EXTRA-MARITAL RELATIONS

Although the Bella Coola do not regard marriage primarily as a means of regulating relations between the sexes, yet the connection between the two is sufficiently close to warrant description in this chapter. A man considers intercourse as one of the normal phenomena of life: by marrying he has exclusive rights to his wife, but few moral restraints deter him from anyone else to whom he can gain access without infringing the prerogatives of some other husband. Moreover, sexual intercourse is not regarded solely as a gratification of desires; it has a significance which can be described, not inaptly, as holy. As already explained, two favourite methods of obtaining success in any undertaking are by preserving lengthy continence or by observing ceremonial chastity. If a young unmarried man or widower should wish to make use of this latter means, he is compelled to have relations with a woman to whom he has no just claims. This is universally recognized, nor is there the slightest odium attached to the man. The only essential is that he neither violate another's wife, nor force a young girl against her will. 581 831 597

At the present time there is great laxity in Bella Coola, a condition which makes it difficult to judge the state of affairs in former times. Every effort was made to obtain satisfactory evidence, and the following was verified and re-verified with the older men. [128]

A wife, properly married with full ceremony, was usually 837 839

837 faithful and cases of rape were either unknown or very rare.
[839] The daughters of chiefs, too, were guarded with great care and
622 any effort to seduce one of them would be punished by her
836 father. The parents of a girl used to watch her carefully, and
the opportunity for immorality was not great in the days when
everyone went to bed at sundown except on the occasion of a
ceremonial dance. As one informant described it:

"The daughters of chiefs used to be looked after as if they were in boxes, cherished and guarded by their parents and relatives. No one would dream of molesting them. And a chief's daughter used to be proud and look after herself. Nowadays, girls don't care, and everything has become degraded."

If the daughter of a chief did demean herself, the parents
[586] lost interest in her, as one who was spoilt. It was always
assumed that a girl of rank was a virgin at marriage, and if it
was discovered that she had been living an immoral life, her
husband in many cases returned her in disgrace to her parents
who, equally shamed, were expected to send back to him the
goods he had expended for their daughter. Loss of virtue was
622 judged only from indirect information. If the daughter of a
848 chief was found pregnant before marriage, she was almost
ostracized by her family. No ceremonial marriage could be
arranged for her, and the child could not be cleansed from the
stigma of illegitimacy.

836 On the other hand, it appears certain that there was a good
567 deal of intercourse in the old days between chiefs and slave
women, or even between slaves and the daughters of chiefs.
[431] In the latter case the woman was often cast aside by her relatives
though they sometimes yielded to the inevitable and tried
to wash away the disgrace with gifts. At the same time, public
opinion was unfavourable to a man who consorted with many
women, or to a woman who allowed herself to be at the disposal
of many men. Any regular union of masters with their slave
women for the deliberate purpose of having children was unknown.
A girl's consent was always necessary, given either
personally or through an intermediary. Even a chief hesitated

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to force his attentions on a slave woman if she objected, 836
although her refusal would be most unusual on account of his [567]
prestige. There were no professional prostitutes; a man [548]
usually gave a small present to a girl from whom he had received
favours, and she was expected to give him a little,
dainty basket filled with undyed cedar-bark to use as a sponge.
Such relations appear always to have been of common occurrence.
Today, as formerly, a man's morality is considered to 836
be his own affair; laxity may lower his prestige, but no law is
broken, and his neighbours laugh and chaff him about it. In 522
fact, sexual matters are discussed with the greatest freedom,
and a person who has been caught is mocked mercilessly.
When visiting a foreign tribe, a man sometimes lives with a
woman and, on parting, composes and sings a song describing [648]
her charms. One man did this after living with a Kitlobe
woman, and on his return to Bella Coola found that some of
his fellows had learnt it in some unexplained manner; they
used to sing it to him, much to their amusement, in part to
his own, and somewhat to the annoyance of his wife. This
perhaps illustrates rather clearly the attitude of the Bella
Coola to an infraction of morality—where no marriage rite
has been broken; it is amusing rather than disgusting. There 836
are no times when the moral code ceases to function. At potlatches,
and also at *kusiut* dances, there appears always to [834]
have been a certain amount of laxity, although this was strictly
prohibited within the house where the ceremony was taking
place. Such behaviour is due to the excitement and stimulus
of a large gathering, not to anything connected with the rites
themselves.

Perverted sexual desires, like other matters connected with 834
the relations of the sexes, are regarded as concerning the individual
alone. Sodomy appears to be unknown. Intercourse 836
by pre-adolescents is held to be disgusting, but carries with it
no social ostracism. Incestuous union, however, is mildly anti- 835
social; it exposes the offender to secret contempt, but does not
interfere with his attainment of whatever position his wealth 556

835 556 and influence may have won for him. One or two instances are known of contact between parent and child, a matter in which it is the duty of no one to interfere; if a person thus flouts public opinion, it is his own affair.

648 167 In view of the firmness of the marriage bond and the absence of professional prostitutes, it is difficult to explain the wholesale exodus of Bella Coola women to Victoria in the last century. In some peculiar manner this came to be regarded as socially proper. The daughters both of chiefs and commoners trooped off for a varying period of months or years
[164] and those who returned brought back venereal diseases which appear to have been unknown before that date. Few of them bore children afterwards, a factor of prime importance in estimating the reasons for the decline of the Bella Coola. The motives which led the women to the city seem to have been: (1) the desire for wealth; (2) the influence of strong liquor; (3) the lure of a strange environment; (4) the attraction of the white men, on account of their higher culture.

It is fortunate for the Bella Coola that this fatal custom has ceased to be considered estimable, although the harm already done may be irremediable.

CHAPTER VIII

DEATH

Death Rites—Memorial Rites—Fate of the Dead

Death Rites

DEATH is marked by even more complicated and prolonged 76
rites than marriage. Like so many primitive peoples, 776
the Bella Coola not only carry out elaborate rituals soon after the actual decease, but hold lengthy commemorative and mourning ceremonials in later years. As these require the [182]
co-operation of a large number of people, the death of an individual affects a wider circle than his own relatives, and the celebrations have, therefore, an important social as well as religious significance.

OMENS OF DEATH

It is not surprising that the Bella Coola, believing in the 763
omnipresence of the supernatural, should consider various peculiar occurrences to be omens of death. One of the simplest of these is to hear the falling of a tree when there is neither wind nor other reason to account for it. Such a fall is audible only to the person whom it warns of approaching death, either to himself or to one of his relatives. A number of men may be in the forest together, when one of them hears the crash of a tree and notices that his companions are unaware of it; he realizes that this is an omen and protects himself by calling out:

"Let this evil react against whoever has been plotting evil against me."

The basis of this custom is the belief that someone has been [154]
practising black magic against the hearer, who, by this answer, is able to cause the sorcery to recoil upon the malefactor. Even [824]
more dangerous than to hear a falling tree, is to have one crash

963 [824] to earth close by. In the winter of 1921-2 three Bella Coola were almost crushed in this manner; within a year the deaths took place of the wife of one, the mother of the second, and the daughter of the third. This was considered definite confirmation of their belief.

963 776 [784] When a chief dies, a supernatural woman, *Skwanāt·ān·ā*, "The Weeper," comes to earth to lament the loss. Crying piteously, she walks to and fro in the woods near the village where the death has taken place, but can be heard or seen only by a person in whose family there will soon be a fatality. This can be counteracted by going boldly to her and collecting some of the clotted mucus that drips from her nose as she weeps. If this is wrapped in the finder's clothing and stored for a year, it brings him good fortune and probably deflects the impending death, but to see "The Weeper" without knowledge of the proper procedure is to court disaster. A prominent Bella Coola woman died in June, 1922, and her son believed that he heard the lamentation of the supernatural visitor about six the next morning in the woods behind the missionary's house. He rushed forth to find her, but was unsuccessful. Within a few days, one of his nieces died, as was to be expected.

963 825 A comparatively common bird in Bella Coola is the *kwakwas*, which is about the size of a robin and dark, greenish brown.[1] Its whistle is frequently heard and no significance is attached to it, but it is an omen of death if a *kwakwas* comes close to a house and chirps out, "*lsi·t.*" On the night of February 20, 1924, one called beneath the window of a man who was about to start on a journey in his motor-boat. Next morning, although the bird lay dead beside his house, he insisted on starting. He camped at Restoration Bay where he was awakened by a voice calling his name, but could see no one. This was probably an owl, a bird which often foretells disaster by calling the name of the person to whom it will occur. Even this did not deter him and within twenty-four hours his

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[1] The bird could not be identified, although it belongs to fact, not mythology.

boat caught fire, his goods were destroyed, and he, himself, 763
barely escaped. The Bella Coola regard coincidences of this 825
kind as confirmation of their beliefs.

As in the last instance, death does not always follow the
hearing or seeing of an omen; it may simply presage some
calamity. It is dangerous for a person to be addressed by a
dog, although it is well known that dogs understand human
speech and can talk if they desire. At the time of the writer's
visit, it was a matter of general knowledge that a dog had
spoken to a middle-aged Bella Coola woman a few years
earlier. The animal was shot immediately, and the woman
never revealed what it had said, but in spite of these pre- [158]
cautions she became insane and has never fully recovered.

The stone man, *Yuyulimxl*, near Kimsquit, who figures so 763
prominently in Bella Coola mythology, is another death omen.
In early times, all who passed his station used to call out to [773]
him, and it was thought that those whom he failed to answer
would die within a year. In that case, the voice was welcome, [825]
but the speech of an owl is still regarded with dread. If one of
these birds utters the name of a dead person, the individual
hearing it will soon die.

Besides these well-recognized omens, the Bella Coola be- 763
lieve that any peculiar visitation or hallucination is a probable 828
precursor of disaster. In many cases these fears are unjustified, but there are always sufficient accidents and misfortunes to corroborate their belief. An old Kimsquit man told of the manner in which his son had once come rushing into the house saying that he had seen a strange, black-faced creature. His father feared that it might have been *Sxaiaxwax*.

"Perhaps it was," continued the old man, "for my boy soon died."

Irrespective of the actual cause of death, about which the father is uncertain, he is convinced that he knew of its coming by his son's omen-apparition.

CAUSES OF DEATH

761 The Bella Coola know that sickness, accident, wilful
murder, old age, and a host of other factors may at any time
terminate a man's life, but they consider that any one of these
direct causes is possible only in conjunction with an indirect
reason of a religious or supernatural nature; in the last analysis
they attribute death to supernatural, not to natural causes.
[773] As described in a previous chapter, an ancient myth attributes
the origin of death to the stupidity of Raven, but this belief,
even if its historical accuracy is accepted, belongs to the realm
of philosophy and ancient history rather than to everyday life.
When a canoe is capsized on the ocean and its occupants are
761 drowned,—the Bella Coola do not consider a drowning a mere
776 accident—it is because *Q̇əmoqwa* was hungry and desired
human flesh. This indirect reason is quite as important as
the direct one. So, too, the death of a man beneath a falling
tree or a land-slide is no accident; *Sä·lma* caused the tree to
crash to earth or the slide to roll downwards. Most individuals
believe that this supernatural being is responsible when an
animal kills a hunter. He delights in death and always sits on
[756] a coffin before it is taken to the grave, although none but
shamans can see him. Any supernatural being can cause death,
but it must not be imagined that the Bella Coola go through
life in a state of constant fear; death may vanquish them in
the forests, but the probabilities are against it. Nor does
753 sickness appear to them as a natural phenomenon. Its cause
is either the intrusion of some foreign object into the body, or
the weakness of one of the patient's supernatural elements.
The only remedy in the latter case is an appeal to the super-
[755] natural, sometimes through the medium of a shaman, whereas
a foreign object in the body can often be extracted by a skilled
[754] practitioner. A disease of this type is often brought on by the
machinations of a sorcerer, and if death results it is attributed
761 to the potency of his charms, not to a natural ailment. Even
[775] ghosts are able to cause death. In war, one man may be able
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to kill an enemy, but his success is accredited to his supernatural 761 possessions which have given him skill as a warrior 726 rather than to his own ability.

It is felt that no ordinary explanation is sufficient to account 761 for the death of a great chief. No matter what may have been the actual cause, it is always said that the supernatural 622 Carpenters, who in the beginning of time created mankind, [773] came down and "seized" or "called back" the deceased, thinking him too good for this world. It is believed that these beings are keen hunters, and that *Âlquntäm* allows them to pursue influential people. This sentiment is always expressed in [533] mourning songs for a dead chief, but although accepted as a matter of fact, it is little more than a formalized belief which serves to comfort the mourners. The infraction of a taboo is another reason frequently given for a chief's death. It is said that there was a loud crash and the earth shook before the death of *Pothis*; he became ill immediately, and his stomach began to swell. The stricken chief said that *Song* itself had fallen upon him, but the common belief was that he had erred in some ritual act. At any rate, he died within a few hours.

RITES FOLLOWING DEATH

News of a critical illness spreads rapidly through the village 763 and the house in which the sufferer is lying becomes a rendezvous for friends asking about his condition. Failure to do so would be considered ungracious, with the result that there is such a constant coming and going that rest is denied the sick person. Shamans are called upon to practise their powers in [756] a noisy manner, and female relatives weep and wail. The din is indescribable.

When the patient shows no further indication of life, the shamans cease, but the women redouble their cries. Relatives, friends, and sympathizers all crowd into the house and begin to weep, often adding verbal lamentations. The progress of the news from house to house can be traced by the wailings. Mean- 764

764 while the relatives are preparing the body for disposal. For
a child, these services are performed by the parents; for a
married man whose parents are dead, by his brothers and other
kindred; for a married woman, by her husband or the members
of her own family. If she has borne no children, it is customary
for her relatives to carry out the funeral rites, especially if she
has been many times rebought from her husband. If such repayment
has not been made, it is considered correct for a
husband to bury his wife, although it is a point of honour for
her relatives to reimburse him later for his expenditure. On
the other hand, when children have been born and financial
assistance mutually given and received several times, it is
proper for the husband to perform the funeral rites, although
he may receive assistance from his wife's kinsmen. There is
no rigid ruling on the point, but bickerings seldom occur in
connection with disposal of the dead. Members of the ances-
[614 tral family are ready to assist in every case, both on account
556] of the disgrace that would follow a niggardly funeral, and also
as a means of displaying their wealth.

The first essential is to wash the body, a rite performed by
men for a man, by women for a woman. It is immaterial who
does this though some of the relatives usually volunteer.
[839] Neither husband nor wife touches a dead consort, though it
is said that long ago a man would hold intercourse with a
deceased wife to indicate his excessive grief. The most
influential member of the immediate family takes the lead in
the various necessary acts, although there is always endless
discussion and advice from members of the ancestral family
[301 and others interested. A nose-ring is placed in the septum
775] of the corpse; if this is omitted, the body will not be able
to dissolve into its elements but will range the earth as a
walking phantom, causing injury to anyone who observes it.
[825] If the deceased has just eaten some of the first run of spring
salmon or olachen, a shaman washes out his mouth with a
sponge of undyed cedar-bark which he throws into the river.
The essence of the salmon is thus extracted from the body; if

this rite is neglected no more salmon will come to the river. No 764
precautions are necessary after the food has been digested. [825]

Many men prepare their coffins before death. If this has [763]
not been done, a large, wooden box is provided by a kinsman [602]
of the deceased. The body is dressed in good clothing and bound into a squatting position, head between knees, hands clasped around shins, and the haunches just above the level of the soles of the feet. In this posture it is thrust into the coffin. Particularly if the corpse has been brought from some distance and *rigor mortis* has set in, it may be necessary to break the back-bone and even to crush the skull before the box can be closed. A stone is placed on the back of the neck, within the [775]
coffin, to prevent the ghost from returning to haunt the survivors. A little choice food is placed beside the body of a dearly loved child for nourishment during the journey to the next world.

From this point onwards, the funeral rites differ according 575
to the rank of the deceased. On the death of an influential 766
sisaok, the senior members of that society meet as soon as possible to arrange the dramatization of the coming of *Malakila*. A *sisaok* son, brother, or other near relative is always present even if he has little importance in the affairs of the society. If the death has taken place during the night, the conference is held the following morning and the rites begin at noon. There may be delay until all have gathered, but about the middle of the first possible day two *sisaok* are sent up one of the mountains behind the village. They carry large, cone-shaped whistles which they blow twice. The sound is plainly audible in the village and all, whether or not members of the *sisaok* society, recognize that a supernatural being is drawing near. After a short interval, another whistle is blown by a *sisaok* concealed on the roof of the house in which the corpse is lying, and after another pause the same sound comes from within, beside the body itself. Most of the uninitiated know [776]
that this is the voice of *Malakila* (also called *Sissiuqatnam*),

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575 but even if unaware of the fact, they realize that some super-
[776] natural, invisible visitor has arrived.

Heralds go from house to house, and sometimes to adjacent
[203] villages as well,[8] inviting the people to pay a farewell visit to
[628] the dead man who will soon leave them; in this invitation the
susaok name of the deceased is used. The guests assemble at
once, irrespective of their rank or membership in the *susaok*
society. To mark their grief, female relatives pull out tufts
of their hair, and both men and women of the immediate family
[302] cut their hair short. The body, either in its coffin or covered
with blankets, is placed between the central fire and the back-
room, immediately behind the place where the singers take
their stations. When all are present, a son or other near rela-
[537] tive who is also a fluent speaker, stands up and expounds how
the Chief, meaning *Mulakila*, has come to visit the dead man,
533 and how all should try to understand the song he has brought.[9]
575 A hidden *susaok* has been blowing a whistle intermittently, and
766 the singers pretend to be able to understand words of a song in
its notes. In reality they have prepared in advance the new one which they now beat out, accompanied by their voices. The theme either describes the coming of the supernatural visitor, or recounts the number of potlatches given by the deceased, and the manner in which these will make smooth the path whither he is going in the same way that distributed goods validate a chief's seat in this world. This song is practised and improved upon amid the booming of the whistle as if the singers were constantly gaining new ideas and embellishments from the words of the supernatural visitor. Sometimes a few incidents are added from the *susaok* myth. After several repetitions, a relative of the dead man asks the singers to beat out the latter's *susaok* songs, as many of them as are remembered from the time he was first initiated into the so-

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[8] The Bella Bella are said to invite foreign guests to this ceremony.

[9] Sometimes the people are present when the coming of *Mulakila*, heralded by
[184] whistling and a thump on the roof, takes place. There are variations in this, as in all other *susaok* rites.

ciety. These are given several times, serving to recall the 533
ceremonies in which the chief took part during his life. At 575
intervals, the new song is repeated and *susaok* members of the 766
audience join in as they become familiar with the words. Fre-
quently one or more relatives of the deceased dance in his [535]
stead during the singing. The details of this rite, especially
of the songs used at it, differ considerably according to the
actions of the person during life; if a mighty chief, the donor
of many potlatches, this fact is described in the song, whereas
only an incident from the ancestral myth can be used for a
young *susaok*. If some of his female relatives are professional [767]
wailers, they function during the ceremony. In all circum-
stances, the rite aims to comfort the grieving kinsmen, an end
which it usually achieves.

As already described, *susaok* ceremonial was in a state of 575
transition at the time of the coming of the white man. Pre- 766
vious to that date, a spectacular funeral prerogative had been 177
adopted from Rivers Inlet,[4] which has since been claimed by a 424
number of *susaok*. All the Bella Coola know of this ceremony,
and most of them desire to perform it at the death of a dearly [178]
loved relative; at the present time this is possible owing to the
slight regard paid to prerogatives, but it is certain that a few
years ago it would have been forbidden to most people, and
that it was never a universal Bella Coola rite.

When this rite is performed, the corpse is allowed to remain 575
in its coffin for at least one night after the day on which 766
Mulakila came and the *susaok* songs were sung. Meanwhile 532
the carpenters have prepared an imitation body, usually of
rags on a light framework, and a wooden representation of the
deceased's crest. Since this figure is to come through the roof
and carry aloft the corpse, stout hooks are attached to its feet.
In theory, the bird or animal disguise used by the first ancestor

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[4] One old Bella Coola stated that this prerogative was obtained during his own life-time from a Rivers Inlet chief who moved to *Tal-ia*. It is impossible to state accurately when this ritual was adopted by the Bella Coola, though it is unquestionably of recent origin.

575 766 [532] of the deceased, traced patrilineally, should come for the body, but this is difficult to arrange in case of whale, bear, and other marine or land mammals. Consequently, it has been customary to use only raven or eagle for this purpose, and it is assumed that at least one of these birds is present in the ancestral history of every individual as a result of the marriage of some of his forbears with a woman possessing one of these crests.[6] It is a common practice for an influential *sisaok* to prepare a figure of this kind during his life-time and tell a son or other trusted relative where it has been hidden; if this has been done, it obviates the necessity of carpenters manufacturing one at short notice.

Several days are often required to complete these arrangements, but on the first evening possible, which may be two or three days after the death, the people are summoned to the dead man's house. The singers take their usual positions behind the fire and beat out the song used at the mourning ceremony already described; then, as on that occasion, they follow it with a number of the deceased's *sisaok* songs. Once more they strike up the one newly composed and, as it is proceeding, whistling is heard, accompanied by the screaming of an eagle or the croaking of a raven. Those who are not members of the *sisaok* society do not understand that these sounds are produced by hidden members blowing whistles on the roof. There is a crash on the planking and, through a space opened by the removal of several boards, the face of the bird crest can be seen peering in. It is a dramatic spectacle and the audience gasps appreciatively, especially those who see in it a manifestation of the supernatural, testifying to the importance of the deceased. If the stage management has been accurate, the figure appears at the termination of the song, but if it has arrived during the actual singing, the singers beat time slowly and cease to use their voices. The eagle, or raven, keeps squealing repeatedly and gradually comes through

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[178] [6] The use of only raven or eagle is probably a degeneration due to recent decay of custom.

the hole in the roof, ponderously and slowly, until its talons grip the "body." In the same gradual fashion it carries this upwards until, just before the burden disappears through the roof, one of the principal singers leads his fellows and the audience in calling out: 575 766

"*Ye··*," which has the significance of, "May you have a safe passage whence you came and whither you are going."

As soon as the bird has disappeared, its notes are heard from above, growing gradually fainter as the actors blow their whistles less violently. An eloquent *sɪsaok* stands up and expounds how the deceased's crest has come down from above to carry away his body, and often mentions incidents in the ancestral myth to explain why this bird had appeared. A young man is sent up to replace the roof boards and the hidden accomplices rejoin the audience unostentatiously. The corpse itself remains hidden in some back corner of the house where it was concealed at the time the dummy was seized, so that nothing indicates what has taken place.

The relatives must give presents to all who have witnessed this ceremonial prerogative. These are now distributed without regard to the rank of the recipient; such gifts are not returnable and are said to be, "What Has Been Shaken Off," like dust from the departing body. A meal, likewise provided by the kinsmen of the deceased, is next served, and as the people are eating, it is customary for senior *sɪsaok* to make laudatory speeches, extolling the dead chief and comforting the survivors by reminding them of the way in which he will be looked after in virtue of his ancestral traditions. This procedure may continue for several hours, and it is only when no one else wishes to speak that the people disperse. [556] [537]

It is not easy to comprehend the attitude of the Bella Coola to this rite. Some influential *sɪsaok* state emphatically that in former days it was possible to carry it out so realistically that the uninitiated were deceived, and never suspected that the actual corpse was later on buried in secret by the singers, carpenters, and *sɪsaok*. On the other hand, those who do not 575 766 781

575 766 981 wish to emphasize the importance of this society, state that the deception was always apparent, and that even the hooks and ropes by which the figure was manipulated could be seen. Still others regard the ceremony as a symbolic means of portraying the manner in which a man's crest comes to carry away his spirit and life. It seems clear that different interpretations [184] must always have been accepted by different members of the community. A young and ingenuous uninitiated, steeped in the atmosphere of the supernatural, may well have believed that he was gazing upon an actual supernatural being, as the senior *sisauk* desired him to do; others must have recognized that a deception of some kind was being practised, but dramatization is such an important factor in Bella Coola life that individuals often disregard the difference between semblance and reality, and it is contrary to custom for a person to cast aspersions upon the prerogative of another. It is easy for such an one to accept the drama as a symbol or representation of the manner in which the crest carries off the intangible elements of the dead. This is certainly the attitude of the Bella Coola at the present time. Everyone realizes that the crest is of human manufacture and that the corpse itself is not carried away, but the rite is still performed and gratifies the survivors by giving them an opportunity to display their prerogative and the cloak of the deceased's ancestor.

575 766 Perhaps because of its relatively recent introduction, details of the performance of this rite are not fully standardized. In some cases, the crest is made to appear at the same time as *Mulakila*, instead of at a subsequent ceremony. It is [424] assumed that the origin of the rite is in some ancient myth in which the body was actually taken above by the crest, an act copied, with the aid of carpenters, by the descendants of the person to whom this occurred. There are no myths of [773] this nature current in Bella Coola, although it is thought that such must have been common among the peoples of the outer coast to explain the prevalence of the practice in that area. [424] One old man mentioned that an *Owiki* myth in which a

[P442(A)]

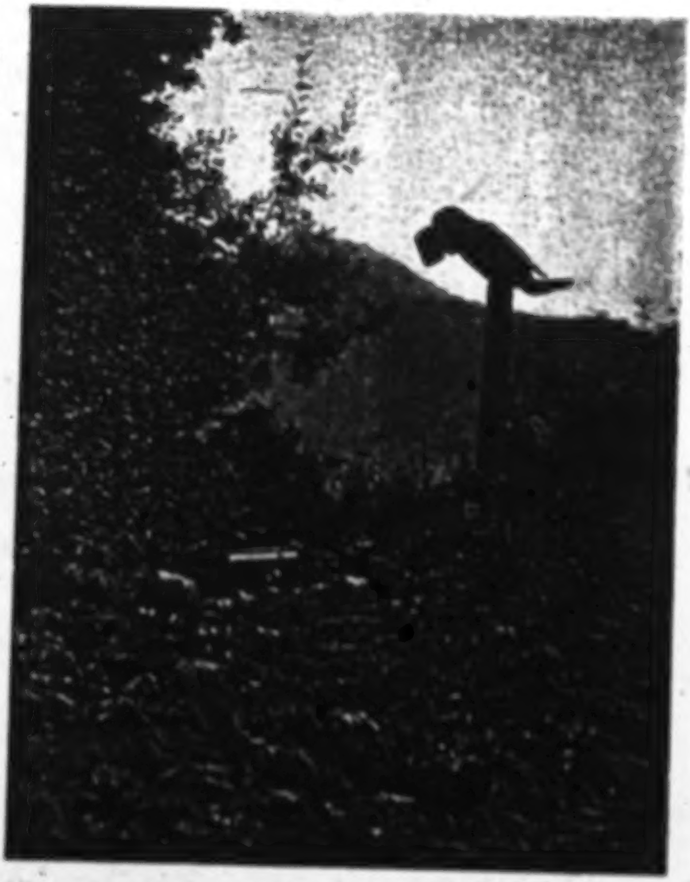
Photograph by H. I. Smith National Museum of Canada

Personal possessions laid on a grave

422
764

PLATE 18

211
764
532



Memorial figure and personal possessions on a grave

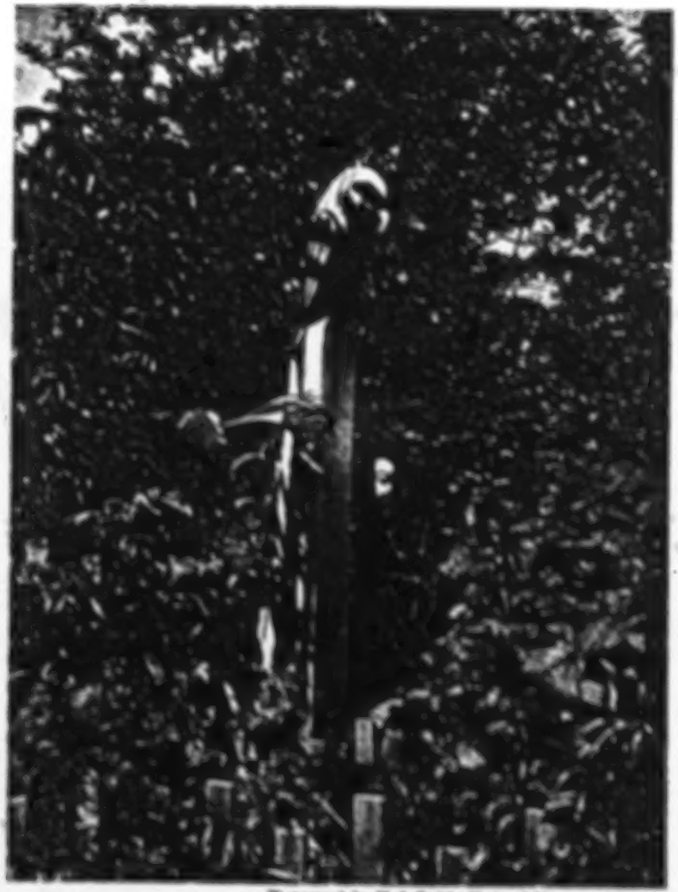
[P 442 (B)]

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948

NE6 Bellacoola NE6

PLATE 19

211.
76A
532



Photograph by H. I. Smith, National Museum of Canada

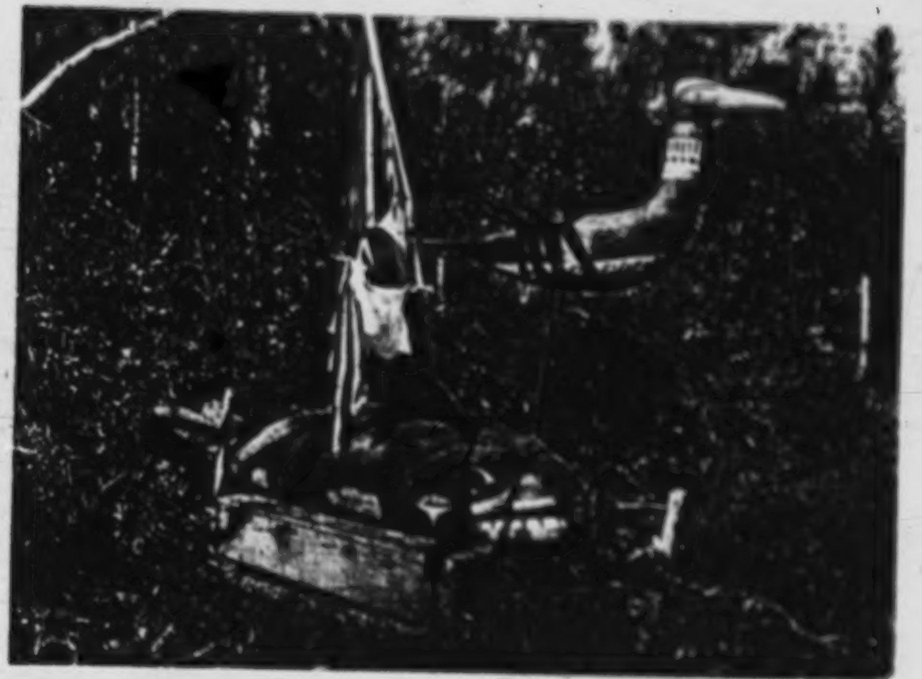
Memorial posts showing crests of the deceased

[p442(c)]

211
764
532

PLATE 20

[p442 (D)]



Photograph by H. I. Smith. National Museum of Canada

Memorial figures of whale and loon

PLATE 21

211
964
532
778

Photograph by H. I. Smith, National Museum of Canada

Totem-pole serving as a memorial post

[p 442 (E)]

211
764
532

PLATE 22

[p442(f)]

Photograph by H. I. Smith, National Museum of Canada

Memorial post with wooden representations of coppers given away by the deceased

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

.211
764
532
417

PLATE 23

Photograph by H. I. Smith. *National Museum of Canada*

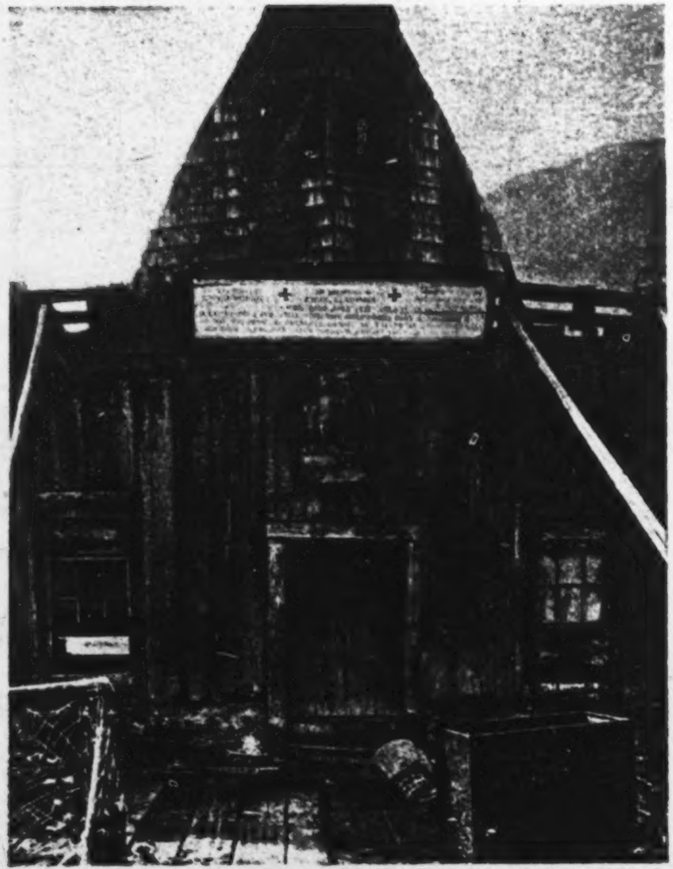
Memorial post with model canoe and figures representing slaves

[p442(G)]

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

342
~~532~~
556
211

PLATE 24



Photograph by H. I. Smith, *National Museum of Canada*

Painted sign showing the wealth distributed at a potlatch. The animal figures above represent mountain goats.

[p 442 (H)]

body became eagle down and was wafted upwards is psychologically of the type which might serve as basis for a rite of this kind. If the descendants of the person to whom this had happened had dramatized the incident at subsequent deaths, a custom analogous to the one here described would have arisen. 575 766 424 [773]

DISPOSAL OF THE BODY

764 There is no fixed time for the disposal of a corpse. When possible, it takes place on the day following death, but as many as four days may elapse if delay is necessary for the performance of the rite just described. Another reason for postponement is the absence of near relatives; if they can be summoned within four or five days, the funeral may be delayed until their arrival. There is always endless discussion concerning the exact details; all relatives and members of the ancestral family take part, though the wishes of a son, brother, or other near kinsman are usually followed. In this, as in so many points of Bella Coola ritual, an influential chief often overrules the desires even of those who are more closely related to the deceased. [796] [554]

Heralds announce the hour chosen,[6] usually about noon, and the people begin to assemble in the deceased's house, even strangers being welcome. Women wail dolorously, and another indication of the occasion is the bundles containing clothing, cooking utensils, and other articles belonging to the dead person. The lid of the coffin has been left open, but when everything is ready, an elderly man is asked to strike it, once, with a stone; then the lid is closed. Planks have been removed and a hole made in one of the front corners of the house, through which the man throws out the stone. The women redouble their lamentations as an old woman, previously asked to do so, lights a bundle of dyed and undyed cedar-bark and climbs through the opening carrying this. No request has been made for pall-bearers, but any strong men, especially [203] [609]

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[6] This is done at present, even after the carrying away of the "body." In former times it was omitted when the corpse was secretly buried by the *susak*. [178]

764 friends of the deceased, pick up the coffin and carry it through [766] the hole. In former times it was frequently difficult to obtain pall-bearers for a slave or friendless person on account of the [784] taboos to which a person performing this service was subject. [761] If a dead person should be taken through a doorway, others using it would soon follow the corpse to the next world. For the same reason, a body must never be moved across the central line of a house; the passage is, therefore, made from the side where it happens to be lying. As soon as the corpse has been taken through, the removed planks are quickly replaced. Mourners and guests stream out through the doorway and follow the coffin, some of them carrying the bundles containing part of the goods of the deceased. Meanwhile the pall-bearers follow the woman with the torch to the cemetery, taking care to carry their burden so that it faces the direction [761] in which they are going; if a dead person is allowed to look backwards, he will beckon some relative to accompany him and the one so summoned will soon die.

There is a cemetery near every village, usually fifty to a hundred yards behind the row of houses in a place from which the heavy timber has been cleared. On arrival, the pall-bearers set down their burden close to the spot where the guide has placed her flaming bark on the ground. The personal possessions of the deceased are likewise deposited near the fire, which is kept alight by female relatives throwing on it small quantities of the dead person's clothing and utensils. The near kinsmen of the deceased choose the exact site of the grave, which must never be dug before the bringing of the corpse. [423] There is no ownership of plots within the cemetery, so that the hole can be made wherever desired. A favourite location is close to the grave of a mother, father, or other near relative, but this is optional; bones are sometimes uncovered when digging, and in that case earth is thrown in once more and a new site selected. There are no professional grave-diggers, [767] nor are arrangements made in advance for men to perform this duty, but friends, especially strong young men, are willing to

undertake the task and bring with them tools for the purpose. 764
When the location has been chosen, they start their work [767]
without further instructions, taking care that the corpse shall face east. It is said that this is done because the sun rises in that quarter, a statement that is probably a mere rationalization. Graves are usually about five feet deep, so that the digging requires some little time, especially in winter when the ground is frozen. All the young men are willing to help and relieve one another at intervals. Meanwhile the women are squatting on the ground near the coffin, some of them throwing objects on the fire, and all wailing intermittently in a high-pitched, tuneless sob into which a mourner sometimes inserts words as if her agony had overcome her.

"Please return whence you came," moans one woman, while another sobs out:

"Perhaps you were unhappy with us and wanted something we could not give you on earth."

The sun sent down the people of *Snxl* and *Snulle-tl*, who [773]
accordingly regard that being as their crest. Mourners of those villages, as well as other individuals to whom the sun stands in the same relationship, are accustomed to address him, saying:

"Please increase your light to guide the way. Our child returns to you."

One woman, whose relatives had been killed by jealous rivals owing to their success in giving potlatches, prayed:

"Come no more. Those for whom you gave light have gone; henceforth shine only whither they have departed."

In some cases such doleful lamentations are mere lip service, but they often express very real grief at the loss of a friend or relative. It is also felt that such sympathy affords comfort to the mourning kindred.

As the grave grows deeper, the relatives keep measuring it and the coffin to insure a close fit and avoid unnecessary digging. As soon as it is ready, an elderly man who has been requested to perform the rite, steps to the north side of the

764 grave carrying a spruce bough in his hand. He touches with
it the edge where he is standing, then, in sunwise order, the
east, south, and west margins. This circuit is repeated four
times and the branch tossed away to westward. This essential
[774] ceremony is based on a belief that the lives, or perhaps the
spirits, of the grave-diggers have been drawn from them into
the grave and are in danger of being pressed down by the
coffin. Should this occur, they would have short lives. The
spruce branch enables the supernatural elements to leave the
cavity and return to their owners who suffer no ill effects.
Anyone, other than a grave-digger, can perform this rite.

The coffin is now lifted into the grave, care being taken
that the corpse faces east. As already described, it is in a
squatting position with haunches almost on the ground.
Boards have been prepared in advance, and with these the
grave-diggers make a roof-like covering, placing at each corner
[775] a stone weighing from ten to fifteen pounds, to prevent the
ghost from returning to trouble the survivors. Earth is
thrown in on top of the boards, and as it falls the wailing
breaks out dolorously in a final crescendo of mourning.
[766] If a chief has been buried, his fellows sometimes sing a *xe·tla*
song. At this time it is proper for one or more chiefs to rise
[533] and speak. No one is required to do so, nor is there any rule
537 as to the order in which they make their remarks. The first
764 speaker is usually a prominent man related to the survivors,
though seldom a son, brother, or other near relative of the
deceased. A speech is generally addressed in part to the
spirit of the dead person, telling it where to go; in part, to the
mourners. For a dead child, emphasis is laid on the fact that
although he did not live long enough to be incorporated into
his ancestral myths on earth, this will be done for him in his
future home. In conclusion, an appeal is often made to
[775] *Alquntām*, under the name of *Smaialotla*, to take pains that
the spirit of the dead is given its rightful place in *Nusmät·a*, in
[773] the section where its first forbears were created, and whither
the spirits of its dead ancestors have returned since the beginning of time.

ning of time. The following speech was made by an elderly 764 Bella Coola chief at the funeral of his great-granddaughter in 537 June, 1922:

"Granddaughter![7] Go with your grandmother[8] to the mountain above *Tcımotł* where my first [patrilineal] ancestor came to earth. Go to the mountain across the river where *Qeil*[9] descended; go to the north where your ancestor found [773] a copper house with a raven inside; go to the Skeena where another of your early ancestors found a whale; go to all the places where your forefathers experienced the incidents recorded in our myths; go and be happy.[10] I do not want these ever-recurring deaths in my family, but I am helpless. I hope that *Sixsixq̇wtnam* will cease hunting us."

Turning to the Carrier Indians who were present, the old man continued: "Thank you for coming twice within two days [648] to share our grief."

Turning back towards the grave, he went on:

"I have made ready the road for you.[11] Your grandfather[12] and I are grieved; our families became united when your parents married, and the bond was cemented by your birth. Now it is lost. When you were born, I rejoiced; now I am sorry. You are all right; you cannot fall because you are supported[13] by the names and fame of your father and mother, your grandfather and grandmother, your uncles and aunts, and your other ancestors who have passed away here in *Q̇omqo·ts*. You rest with them in your own village where is located your power from the experiences of your forefathers.

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[7] The term, *slemts*, was used, although the child was really a great-grandchild.

[8] The grandmother had been buried two days previously.

[9] One of the first people to reach this earth.

[10] The places and people mentioned were all described in the myths of the dead child's ancestral family.

[11] A reference to goods distributed by the speaker at a ceremony held a few days [763] previously when it was certain that the child would soon die.

[12] The child's mother's father. [431]

[13] Supported, *kisianmotla*, a word having the sense of physical support. The implication is that the deceased relatives are sitting in such a close circle that the [195] pressure of their bodies is enough to prevent any one of them, including the dead child, from falling.

They will look after you and, being chiefs, they will be able to do so properly. You will be strong indeed. I am heavy with grief. My grandchildren alone serve to anchor me to *Q̣omqo·ts*; otherwise I would go to *Tcimotl*.[14] Now that you have gone I may become light-headed and depart. No. I have other grandchildren and great-grandchildren. I will bear up and be a man, and show myself the chief that I am by right."

During this speech the mourners remained seated on the ground, many of the women wailing at intervals and the men listening with more or less attention except those who were filling in the grave. Once or twice the speaker hesitated for a suitable word and suggestions were called out to him.

As the old man finished speaking and sat down, another chief arose.[15]

"Children," he said, addressing the parents of the dead child, "You have indeed suffered misfortunes. A few days ago, your mother[16] died; today, your daughter. Perhaps it is all for the best. Remember how many ancestors who have gone before will be waiting to receive the child; she will be well cared for. Death passes no one, chief or commoner, but do not despair even at this double visitation. Your mother[17] never did an evil action to anyone, never said a harsh word to anyone; try to imitate her. See! I have neither father nor mother. They are both dead; we all go the same way."

In conclusion he urged the step-father of the grieving father, husband of the woman who had died a few days previously, to bear up.

As the second speaker finished, a third arose and spoke briefly.

"I am sorry," he said, "for Joe[18] in his grief today. We have

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[14] The home of the speaker's ancestral family.

[15] No arrangements had been made in advance concerning who should speak or the order in which each should address the mourners.

[16] The mother of the child's father had died a few days previously.

[17] Referring to the mother of the child's father.

[18] The dead child's mother's father; he was addressed by his ancestral name on this occasion.

put his granddaughter into the ground beside her grandmother 764
but it may all be for the best."[18] 537

There is no doubt that condolences of this nature assist the mourning relatives to bear up under their grief. This fact was emphasized by several Bella Coola, and in addition the writer was able to observe it on several occasions. They readily respond to suggestions of any kind and undoubtedly derive comfort from the laudatory comments of influential chiefs.

Speeches of this general nature are always delivered as the grave is being filled in. Sometimes this work is finished before all who wish to do so have expressed themselves, sometimes the remarks are so short that they are ended before all the earth has been thrown back. When the hole has been filled to 764
ground level, it is stamped down and the surplus earth scattered out of sight among the bushes, no mound being thrown up.

Great care is always taken to prevent the return of the 764
ghost. In addition to the weighting with stones already 775
described, other methods are used before the funeral party leaves the cemetery. Heavy boards are usually laid flat over the grave and rocks piled on these bar the way up from below. A further precaution is the setting upright of four stakes, one at each corner of the hole, and fastening ropes of cedar-bark between them along the east and west sides of the grave. The significance of this is not fully understood, except that the ghost cannot pass the strands. Four spruce saplings are cut [824]
and placed either between the grave and the village, or one on each side of the hole; their sharp needles form an effective barrier.

While these precautions are being taken, any clothing and 764
utensils brought to the grave and not already consumed are thrown on the fire and allowed to blaze brightly. The ashes

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[18] It was impossible to record these speeches *verbatim* at the time of their delivery. [126]
The writer was able to make notes, which were amplified by each speaker later telling him what he had said. Although lacking literal accuracy, the above may be considered essentially correct.

764 are never disturbed, being considered, in some vague way, "bad." The tools used for digging the grave are left standing upright in the loose earth, an action for which no explanation can be given by the Bella Coola. When these various rites have been performed, the funeral party returns to the village and disperses.

766
845 At present, interment is the customary method for disposing of the bodies of all except twins, whose bodies are placed in trees. Formerly, other means were sometimes employed, as
764 they still are occasionally. Instead of inhumation, a coffin
178 was frequently placed on a scaffold close behind the deceased's house. Whenever another relative died, planks were laid across, above the first box, and the new one deposited on these, so that in time the scaffold grew to resemble a house-like structure with many compartments. In the last century a certain shaman, *Äskankots* by name, is said to have pointed out that corpses were frequently carried off by wolves, *snmq*, and other animals. For this reason he persuaded the people to inter their dead. 2

764 Somewhat similar to this practice was the placing of corpses in trees. Until the last few years this was sometimes done with poor children; formerly, it was not unknown even for chiefs. An elderly Kimsquit man mentioned that the coffin containing the body of his grandfather, a chief, was placed in the crotch of a tree where no rain could penetrate. This means of disposal was probably never habitual. Even at the present time, the corpse of a dearly loved child is occasionally placed above, instead of under the ground. If the parents desire to do this, they erect in the cemetery a carved figure of one of their crests and deposit the coffin on top of it. This is, of course, a graphic representation of the deceased's origin myth and symbolizes the way in which the dead person has become associated with it.

According to several of the older men, cremation was practised by the Bella Coola for some time after the first settlement of the earth. A fire was built outside the house and the body

thrown on it. One rather philosophic old man suggested that 764
in this way the soul could easily return to *Nusmät·a*. It is
possible that this means of disposal was carried out in former
times, but no informant had actually seen it practised. The 764
Bella Coola state that cremation is carried out by the Kitlobe[10]
and the Carriers. On the morning after a burning, young men 829
of the former tribe rush to the spot and smear their faces with
the semi-charred bones, amid much shouting. The Carriers
are said to stand with their bodies inclined over the burning
corpse and to smear on their faces any grease exuded from it.
The accuracy of these statements is very doubtful, and can
have no bearing on the reputed practice of cremation among
the Bella Coola.

The bodies of rich or poor, chiefs, commoners, or slaves, all 766
are buried in a similar manner though with differences in the
complexity of ritual. Nor is any different method practised
for criminals, murdered people, or those committing suicide.
It is believed that in case of self-destruction the body cannot 762
separate into its elements and reach *Nusmät·a*; that part
which becomes the ghost is able to go to the land below, but [775]
neither spirit nor life can ascend. According to one man, who
may, however, have been affected by Christian influence, this
is because *Älquntäm* decrees the length of life and any wilful
shortening is insulting to him. Suicide is rare among the Bella
Coola and four cases only were heard of. One woman killed
herself in shame at having accidentally set fire to a village,
another because her husband was unduly jealous, and two men
through bladder stricture.

On the whole, Bella Coola methods for disposal of the dead 177
have altered but little since the coming of the white man. The 764
change from sub-aerial exposure to interment was probably
not due to foreign influence although the introduction of metal
shovels has facilitated the digging of graves and probably
hastened the movement. A change in posture has, however,
taken place. In former times, a corpse was always buried

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[10] If not at present, at least within the memory of elderly people.

177 squatting, now it is customary to use the extended position.
It is impossible to state whether this is the direct result of
764 white teaching, or whether the ease with which large boxes can
now be made has led to interment at full length.

RITES FOLLOWING DISPOSAL OF THE BODY

768 Interment of the corpse does not end the ceremonial
necessitated by a death in the community. As already described, some of the clothing and utensils of the dead person are burned during the funeral, but all are not destroyed at that time. The proportion kept for future treatment is immaterial, nor is there any established usage concerning the type of object reserved. During the days following the funeral, relatives of the deceased carefully gather his clothing, cooking utensils, rifles, and all other articles which have been his personal property or used exclusively by him. On the fourth day, these are taken to the cemetery by his immediate family, accompanied by as many of their friends as wish to show their sympathy. A fire is kindled near the grave and on it is deposited whatever can be burnt; other objects are either cast into the flames or piled near at hand (see Plate 17). It is most important that every article belonging to the deceased should be disposed of in this way. There are two reasons for this. First, it is considered indecent to use the possessions of a dead person; they would have the effect of
poison on anyone doing so. Secondly, the ghost of the de-
[775] ceased receives goods that are burnt or deposited on the grave
[753] four days after the funeral. If deprived of what belongs to
him, a ghost punishes the offenders by causing sickness.
178 Occasionally a new rifle, or some other treasured possession,
768 is kept by a relative or friend; this is contrary to the established custom, but is justified by considering the article to be a gift from the deceased or a memento of him. No one would accept such a legacy unless he felt sure that the dead man

768

entertained such kindly sentiments towards him that he would [178]
be glad to have his friend receive it. 768

In recent years the number of incombustible objects has 177
increased enormously with the introduction of metal utensils,
gramophones, and other things obtained from white traders. 775
Although these are considered to be of use to the ghost, and
must be carefully placed near the grave, they can be publicly
exchanged for others by a relative. The sentiments expressed
on such occasions are that the ghost, though aware of what is
taking place, does not resent an open transfer; and that it is
unnecessary to deposit the equivalent of what has been removed.
There is undoubtedly a vague idea that the ghost
uses, not the actual object, but its essence, which is received
by the deposition. It must be emphasized that this feeling
has not become crystallized to such a state that it is customary
to replace goods laid on the grave with others. Such an exchange
is a rare event and would cause animosity if carried [578]
out by anyone except a near relative.

Sometimes a dying person requests that a house be erected 764
over his grave, a common Bella Bella custom. This is built [763]
immediately after the funeral and articles that cannot be burnt
are placed within it instead of being piled on the ground. The [177]
sorrowing relatives may choose to erect a picket fence around
the spot, but no other mark for the grave is put up until a
memorial potlatch several years after death. House or fence
soon falls into decay and rarely an effort is made to repair
either. Nor is the grave itself disturbed. Cow-parsnips, [262]
which are much used for food, grow frequently in cemeteries,
but no one would gather the shoots that rise above a grave;
they are food belonging to the dead person. The white man [245]
has taught the Bella Coola how to plant apple-trees and these [177]
are often set out in graveyards, though the fruit is allowed to
fall to the ground for the benefit of those interred beneath.
The Bella Bella are said formerly to have replaced at intervals 765
the coffin containing a dead person, but this seems never to
have been a Bella Coola practice. Indeed, a grave is never

Indeed, a grave is never
965 disturbed except, rarely, when it is necessary to obtain a
[989] portion of a skeleton for magical purposes. In such a case,
the coffin lid must be lifted up on the side away from the
[761] opener, so that he looks within over its upturned edge. A
person failing to obey this injunction will soon die.

768 Burning or deposition near the grave is not restricted to
the actual utensils and artifacts of the deceased. There, too,
must be laid dried salmon which a man has smoked for winter
use, as well as pulverized berries and other foods made ready
[264] by a woman; to eat food prepared by a dead person seems
indescribably indecent. In recent years, the crop, if a man
dies after tilling and sowing a field, is allowed to ripen, and
then rot unharvested. So, too, the canoe in which a body has
been brought home must be destroyed. The Bella Coola are
not always able to state reasons for these actions, but it is
[761] apparent that the underlying sentiment is that the taboo of
[784] death lies upon any object prepared by the deceased, or that
has been in contact with a corpse.

764 The rituals described above may be considered as religious
in nature; almost equally important are the social require-
431 ments of paying those who have assisted at a funeral. This
556 indebtedness falls on the near relatives, though all members
of the ancestral family are obligated in a somewhat indefinite
[614] manner. If a canoe has been destroyed that did not belong to the deceased, the owner must be recompensed. Presents must be given to the pall-bearers, to the woman who bore the flaming bark, to the grave-diggers, to those who delivered laudatory orations, and to all others who assisted in any way. Failure to do so brands the relatives as misers with little respect for the deceased; lavish recompense shows that they have the outlook and minds of chiefs. Consequently, even poor people try to give as generous rewards as possible, both for their own sakes and out of respect to the dead person. Unfortunately, it was impossible to obtain details of the ceremony at which this takes place. The increase in wealth in recent years has made it possible to give memorial potlatches soon after death

and recompense to funeral assistants is usually deferred until 764
that time. Such was often true even in former years, although 431
poor people used to call their fellow-villagers together for the 556
express purpose of publicly rewarding those who had helped
to bury one of their relatives. It is probable that a ceremony
of this kind was of a simple type. Another expedient is, and
was, to give gifts to the grave-diggers and others at any convenient [575]
ceremony, such as a non-sacred *susaok* dance. As [796]
repeatedly mentioned, when the people have been called together
for a ceremony, advantage is often taken of the gathering
to settle debts or to perform rites of an entirely different nature.
It is probable that the summoning of guests solely to witness
the payment of helpers was always unusual; at present it never
occurs. On those occasions when a body was buried in secret [766]
after the carrying away of a dummy figure by the crest, the
goods of the deceased were deposited as usual in the cemetery.
Those who carried them were the ones who had performed the
secret interment, and when publicly recompensed for taking
articles to the grave it was possible to increase the value of the
gifts as reward for the hidden rite without exposing the
subterfuge.

Another type of ceremonial taking place after a funeral is 764
the cleansing from the contamination of death of near relatives
of the deceased, and of those who have handled the corpse. If 783
spring salmon or olachen are running, pall-bearers must not go
near the river for ten days, or twenty according to some informants, [825]
after taking a body to the grave. They have become
tainted with ceremonial uncleanness which, if brought to the
river bank, would poison the salmon. Unwillingness to become
affected in this way led, on at least one occasion, to an elderly,
friendless slave being carried out to the cemetery by some old
women who covered him with boards. The taint on grave-diggers
cannot be removed, but automatically lapses after ten
days.

The individual in greatest danger is the husband or wife
whose consort has passed away. It is believed that *Sä-lma* [776]

764 comes and sits on the coffin during every funeral, seeking further victims. Death has so contaminated a widow or widower
783 that she or he will fall an easy prey unless ceremonially puri-
[776] fied. No special acts are carried out between interment and
the burning of goods four days later, but the following four
days must be spent in a small shelter of branches behind the
village, hidden from sight in the forest. Within this the man
or woman lies on the ground with legs close together and bent
[841] at the knees, in the same position as a girl during the four days
after her first menstruation. A male friend accompanies a widower; a female, a widow. This companion keeps a fire burning and administers to the comfort of the patient, for such a bereaved person is considered to be. Every evening the two return home and leave again the following morning. On one of these days, the companion scours the woods east of the village to find four spruce saplings growing within sight of each other in an east to west direction. To this place he leads the survivor on the morning after the fourth day of concealment* in the shelter. He bends down the top of the western sapling and ties it into a loop with a rope composed of alternate strands of dyed and undyed cedar-bark. The widower, or widow, crawls through this opening to the east and then makes a circle, sunwise, around the sapling. Passing to the next one, the same procedure is repeated, and so in succession for the third and fourth, each being left tied into a loop. There are at least two variations in this rite: Instead of passing through four saplings, some individuals choose to crawl four times through a single one, with a sunwise circuit intervening in every case. If the survivor be a member of a family in which it is customary to use four saplings, and if the friend cannot find four in proper alignment, he cuts a number of spruce branches and sets them upright, butts in the ground, leaving a small hole between them. Four sets of these are arranged, as substitutes for four saplings, and the crawling through takes

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*There is variation in the exact time for this rite. Some individuals practise it on the fifth day after death and omit the waiting in the shelter.

place in the manner already described. After passing through 764
the fourth hole, or for the fourth time through the single 783
opening, the two go to some lonely pool in the forest where the
mourner washes. They light a fire and deposit on it some of
his clothing, placing the rest in a stump or hollow tree. The
friend always takes with him a supply of new clothing which
the person being purified puts on and returns home, cleansed
from the immediate taint of death.

The above rite protects widower or widow, but does not 765
alter the fact that for one year they are ceremonially "unclean" [783]
and must obey sundry taboos. They must not go to the bank
of the river, or even appear at the front door of a house facing
it. To do so is displeasing to the salmon; for the same reason [825]
they cannot eat this fish unless it has been smoked. If they [262]
wish to travel on the ocean, they cannot embark at the village
but must go through the woods to a point on the shore and [484]
there be picked up by the canoe. There is a regular "Widows
and Widowers Rock" about a mile on either side of every village
on the ocean. The one near Kimsquit is called *Sqlan'li*,
and there is thought to be blood on it. A person mourning a [292]
consort must wear a hat decorated with miniature coppers of
which the bottoms are bent upwards; should this be omitted, [761]
when the offender remarries, the new husband or wife will
soon die.

In addition to these taboos, there are customary laws of [626]
behaviour, an infraction of which renders the offender liable
to social disapproval. Widows and widowers should cut their [302]
hair short, and the former should rub ashes on the face. Sexual
intercourse is prohibited to both sexes; if this rule is broken, [834]
the relatives of the deceased are insulted. Remarriage should
not take place for at least a year, although among poor people [587]
it sometimes occurs after only six months, in which case all [795]
taboos and restrictions automatically cease. There is no law
on this point, but it is considered fitting to allow this period
to elapse. These requirements clearly indicate that bereavement
is not merely an individual affair, but entails social and

765 religious rites affecting the whole community. In spite of the prohibitions enforced, it is said that a widow or widower usually becomes fat after the death of a partner. This observation agrees with several instances known to the writer, but whether it is of universal application is doubtful, although the Bella Coola emphatically state that this is the case.

MEMORIAL RITES

THE MEMORIAL POTLATCH

177 556 769 [622] The most important, as well as the most complicated, mourning rite is the memorial potlatch, *skwanät*, for which so much wealth is required that it can be carried out by chiefs alone. This ceremony, being associated with *sisaok* rites, has altered enormously in form within recent years. Before the introduction of cone-shaped whistles and other foreign elements, it was almost indistinguishable from an ordinary potlatch and the two were occasionally combined, having as central feature the return of the deceased in the form of his crest. Among the tribes of the outer coast, especially the Bella Bella, the two types of ceremonial were apparently distinct, and as the Bella Coola adopted more and more of their neighbours' *sisaok* ritual, they followed their custom in this respect as well. It is said that a certain *Noäkila*, uncle of a man about sixty years of age in 1922, was the last to combine both. The Bella Bella felt that he had thereby committed a ritual error for which he would be punished; within a few years he died, and the Bella Coola assumed that this was due to the unanimous expectation of his death on the part of the Bella Bella. From that time onwards, the Bella Coola were careful to separate features belonging to potlatches from those of memorial potlatches.

[648] After a comparatively few years, the white man's domination had increased so enormously on the central coast that the potlatch, including both types, was prohibited by law. Owing to the consequent difficulty of performing complicated

rites, the Bella Coola were again led to carry out at a single 177
gathering features which properly belonged to several. To 556*
combine the memorial potlatch with the potlatch, being a 769
return to an earlier custom, presented no serious difficulties
and was consequently widely adopted. The Kimsquit people,
moreover, seem never to have adopted the clear Bella Bella
differentiation, and as the rapid decrease in population threw
them in ever closer contact with the Bella Coola, their influence
tended to lessen differences between the two ceremonials.

At the present time, a memorial potlatch is almost iden- 556*
tical with an ordinary potlatch in practice. The same rites 769
are often carried out at both; each varies considerably, and
when the distinctive elements are omitted the two become
indistinguishable. None the less, they are never confused in
the minds of the participants. The house where a potlatch,
kam, is taking place is called a *nuslmsta*, that where a memorial
potlatch, *skwanät*, is occurring, a *nuskwanätsta*. In giving [203]
invitations and making comments, heralds are careful not to
refer to the ritual under the wrong name; in fact, it may be said
that the chief difference between the two is in the minds of the
donor and his guests. Sociologically, both are considered to
be on a par. Equal wealth is required, and each can be [622]
performed only by a chief, both on account of the expenditure
involved and owing to the difficulties in procedure which are
thought to be too great for a lesser man to surmount.

Difference in the donor's motives is usually sufficient to [622]
separate a memorial potlatch from an ordinary one. The latter
is given by a chief desirous of increasing his prestige by lavish
expenditure, for which one of the excuses is the validation of
the appearance of a dead relative. Although this is the central
feature, so many other rites are performed that it is sometimes
obscured or may, indeed, be omitted entirely. On the other
hand, a memorial potlatch occurs as soon as possible after the
death of a father, mother, or other dearly loved kinsman, and
it is clear to all that the donor's reasons for the rite are to com-
memorate the deceased, and to console himself and his imme-

556 769 diate family. Confusion is probable only when a chief is bereaved after he has stored up goods and made preliminary preparations for a potlatch; he may then carry out the rites intended, but designate the ceremony a memorial potlatch. [575] More often, however, the affair is limited to rites associated with the deceased. Consequently, there is omission of the initiation of neophytes into the *susaok* and *a'alk* societies,[11] there is no establishment of new seats for young relatives of the donor, and no strengthening of his own. [184] It must be emphasized once more that there is no unalterable sequence of prescribed rituals at either potlatch or memorial potlatch; the omissions just mentioned are customary, not universal, and when present the ritual of the two ceremonies is identical. Except on those rare occasions when omitted at a potlatch, the return of a dead relative is the central feature of both.

[178] In recent years, the great increase in wealth has made it possible for a chief to perform a memorial potlatch soon after the death of an esteemed relative. This was rarely the case in former times, but as there was no other reason for which valuables were so ardently desired, every expedient was used to obtain the necessary goods. Occasionally, a chief happened to have the needful goods stored up so that he could give a memorial potlatch almost immediately. To such a fortunate individual the term, *yestla*, was applied, a word difficult to translate but combining the significances of *rich*, *ready*, *fortunate*, and *revered*.

[796] Memorial potlatches, like those of the ordinary kind, are usually held in the early autumn, though occasionally one may be postponed until after the *kusiut* season. When an intending donor has decided that he owns sufficient goods, he first calls in his fellow-chiefs and makes known his intentions, at the same time expounding in considerable detail the myths which [533] he proposes to use as themes for mourning songs, and for other

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[11] Performance of such rites at a memorial potlatch would be considered sinful by the Bella Bella and were always omitted during the period when their influence was important.

prerogatives connected with the ceremony. The actual re- 556*
counting of the myths may be done by a fluent speaker on 769
behalf of the bereaved man, and when he has finished speaking,
it is proper for several of his peers to make complimentary [533]
speeches, lauding the future donor for his intentions. Food is [537]
then served and the gathering breaks up.

The preliminaries of a memorial potlatch do not differ from those of an ordinary one. There is the same counting and recounting of goods, the same giving and receiving of presents, the same lending and borrowing. When at last the donor is ready, the heralds call his fellow-villagers to his house for announcement of the arrangements and allotment of the work. As at a potlatch, food is provided on a lavish scale, and there is the same sham-fight with a battering-ram ending in the destruction of part of the house. Then the carpenters receive their instructions; some to make different sections of the new structure, some to paint ancestral designs on the front and back walls, and some to make the various objects required.

The first difference between a memorial and an ordinary 211
potlatch is apparent at this allotment of work. Instead of a 556*
totem-pole to record the glories of the donor's ancestry,[22] car- 764
penters are requested to make memorial-posts for the dead 769
relative who is being commemorated. These are erected in the cemetery near the grave and are of three kinds, although it is unusual for all three to be set up for a single chief.

The first consists of a wooden post carved with the design
of one or more of the deceased's crests (see Plates 19 and 20).
These figures are usually representations of the bird or animal [532]
cloaks used by his first ancestors; it is customary to portray the one traced through the father on the right, that traced through the mother on the left. Instead of a cloak, the figure may portray the post down which swarmed his first ancestor in the beginning of time, or Mount *Nusqalst* in human form, wearing a broad-rimmed hat as he did before he turned to

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[22] Even the construction of a new house and the painting of new designs is often omitted.

211 stone and served as landing-place for some of the first settlers.
In fact, any of the dead person's crests may be used according
*556 to the wishes of the chief giving the memorial potlatch. A
764 figure displayed in this way cannot be used as the guise in
769 which the dead relative returns, but as every individual has
several crests, inability to use one does not make it difficult to
carry out the rite. According to one well-informed old man, when a design has once been used in a cemetery it cannot again be shown by members of the ancestral family, having itself become "dead." Other informants flatly contradicted this statement, and it seems clear that the above is true only with regard to the use of the figure in connection with the return of the deceased. The erection of the figure serves to remind all beholders, especially foreign guests summoned to the memorial potlatch, of the ancestral myth of the deceased. It is, there-
[778] fore, equivalent to a totem-pole erected during a man's lifetime, in fact, one of these is sometimes moved to the cemetery to serve as a memorial-post (see Plate 21). Instead of placing a representation of the crest in the cemetery, one is sometimes painted on broad boards and placed on some conspicuous promontory where all who pass by will see it and think of the person commemorated.

The second type of memorial consists of plain poles set upright in the cemetery, one for each major ceremony given by the deceased. Potlatches, memorial potlatches, and *kukusiutek*
[609] (II, p. 29) are alone indicated in this way, these being the only ones to which foreign guests are invited. These poles suggest, in a general way, the greatness of the deceased.

The third type of memorial-post comprises representations of the goods given away by the deceased. These are usually
[532] painted on boards attached to a post set up near the grave. On this are pictures of canoes, coppers, slaves, and other valuables distributed at potlatches or memorial potlatches (see Plate 22). Alternatively, there may be a series of small poles, each surmounted by a model canoe manned by miniature human figures, symbolic of a canoe and slaves given away

(see Plate 23). So, too, wooden representations of coppers 211
are often affixed to an upright post. Not only men are commemorated 556 *
in this way, a father often places over his daughter's
grave pictures of the goods used to rebuy her from her 764
husband; wooden plaques representing coppers are commonly 769
used for this purpose.[24] Such symbols are usually cut down [532]
after a year owing to a vague feeling that it is not proper for
them to remain standing too long. The function of this type
of memorial is to mark the social status of the dead person as
judged by the riches given away by him, or on his behalf,
during his life-time. With the introduction of writing, the [177]
Bella Coola have been quick to recognize it as an easy means
for recording the wealth distributed by a chief. In consequence, [212]
signs are often painted and erected, giving in figures
a statement of his financial transactions. Another recent
introduction has been the tombstone. One of these is often
set up with the name of the deceased carved on it to perpetuate
his memory, and a representation of his crest to record his [532]
ancestral history. Such a memorial combines the functions
of the first and third types.

As the carpenters labour at the memorials, other arrangements 556 *
for the ceremony proceed apace. As at a potlatch, the
fellow-villagers of the donor may be invited repeatedly to his 769
house for the performance of *susaok* dances, but this feature is [575]
often omitted, especially if there are no neophytes to be initiated.
The mask to be worn by the deceased relative must
be prepared in secret; or if several are to be commemorated
at the single ceremony, one must be made ready for each. As
the time draws near, envoys are dispatched to invite foreign [203]
guests if it has been decided to have strangers present. This [609]
has been customary for many years, but during the period
when no features of the potlatch were allowed at a memorial
potlatch, the latter was sometimes carried out in the presence of
the donor's fellow-villagers alone. The actual departure of the

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[24] The National Museum of Canada, at Ottawa, has specimens of these wooden coppers.

*556 messengers may be marked with the same ritual as at a pot-
latch, but there is always curtailment of *sisaok* features if rites
769 of that nature are to be omitted.

Meanwhile other preparations have not been neglected.
424 Among the prerogatives embodied in many origin myths, is
that of the presence of professional mourners at memorial
*556 potlatches. If mention of these is made in the ancient tradi-
769 tion of the donor's ancestral family, it is a matter of pride for
[767] him to do as was done by his ancestors in the distant past.
For example, it may be recorded that at the memorial potlatch
of some ancient chief, a number of his younger relatives ap-
peared with red paint smeared upon their faces, with finely
chopped undyed cedar-bark in the hair, or with bands of the
[765] same material across their heads. *Ālquntäm* had decreed that
they should thus exhibit their grief, and the descendants of
the chief have since had the privilege of doing likewise. Such
signs of mourning may not, however, be worn without proper
validation. It is only the members of the ancestral family
who are entitled to don these marks, and among them, only
those whose right has been confirmed by the distribution of
presents. This is a masculine professional prerogative, known
[562] by the same name as the feminine one of uttering a droning
cry to which it is closely akin. The right is ratified at memorial
potlatches, and the donor of one is glad to do so as a means of
displaying his own wealth as well as of making plain the glory
of his ancestors to whom the one being commemorated has
returned. There is no mention of professional mourners in
[767] the myths of many families, nor are they ever as important in
[171] Bella Coola as among the Bella Bella and other tribes of the
outer coast. If such belong to the family of the donor, he
notifies the incumbents and asks them to be ready, although,
eager to act, they seldom wait for such an invitation.

533 The most difficult task is the preparation of mourning songs
at which the singers toil for several weeks. The donor first
*556 invites them to his house and recounts the myths from which
769 they must be composed. These may include several traditions

of different ancestral families to which the deceased belonged, 533
irrespective of whether or not he had used a name from one. 556
Being a member of the group, its songs can legally be used in 769
his honour. Elements from different myths are often combined into one composition, corresponding to the different localities and characters which the dead person has visited in travelling back the path of his multiple ancestors to the beginning of time. If one person only is being commemorated, four songs are prepared; if several, two are used for each. Three [801] for any individual is unlucky. Two types, *skwanät* and *änultʋnänk*, are in common usage, and the singers, after conversation with the donor of the ceremony, decide which shall be employed. The former describes in some detail features from one or more of the deceased's ancestral myths, mentions the journey which he has taken to visit the individuals and scenes referred to, and calls on him to assume the form of his first forefather. A common theme is to state the origin of his name, and how he loved it so greatly that he left the earth to follow it back through time and space. The following is an abbreviated version of such a song, based on the origin myth of *Käliäkʋs*:

"We have been unable to satisfy you here. Go whither *Käliäkʋs* came, and become a raven. Go to the east and get abalone-shell; go to the west and get copper. They will satisfy you."

Another *skwanät* of the same type is:

"Your first ancestor circled the world with the aid of an abalone-shell paddle. Do you likewise. That will gratify you as nothing on earth could do."

On the other hand, an *änultʋnänk* seldom refers to the ancestral history of the deceased, but to his actions during life. It records the number of slaves, canoes, and other valuables given away at potlatches,[28] and alludes to other praiseworthy actions. This type of mourning song, though usually used [622]

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[28] An analogous method of making known a man's distribution of wealth is by a written sign over his door (see Plate 24).

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533 only for a chief, can be employed for a dead child. In this case,
*556 the theme describes the efforts of the parents to incorporate
the deceased in the traditions of their ancestors, and the
769 number of times he had been ceremonially married. The text
[622] of one used a few years ago is:

"We said, Hail! *Sınxälotla* [the child's crest was the Sun] when she was born. What more could we have done? Why did she leave us?"

The text may refer to the prerogative of employing mourners, as in the following:

"Come ye professional mourners, help me to give voice to my lamentations."

The tunes of mourning songs are usually remembered from year to year, and the singers may merely alter words to make an old song applicable. In some cases, such compositions are
[424] changed so slightly that they become virtually possessions of
an ancestral family, and may then be preserved for generations until even the history of the names embodied is forgotten.
[174] Occasionally, ancient relationship between two such groups
can be deduced from the occurrence of the same names in their mourning songs, although all traditions of intermarriage have been forgotten. There is considerable difference between the tunes of *skwanät* and *änultunänk*; in fact, this distinction may be more important than the themes, since the latter do not invariably conform to the types just described. A few items of ancestral history may be incorporated into a song dealing primarily with the actions of the deceased and *vice versa*. Sometimes four of one type are used, sometimes two of each. Much thought is devoted to the compositions, the singers meeting every day to try over and improve one another's efforts. The texts, long and complicated, require much practice, since any error would be an admission of gross inefficiency. These daily rehearsals take place in the donor's house and he is required to provide food for the singers. It is not uncommon to use a
[177] song of Bella Bella origin, since the Bella Coola admit that
members of that tribe excel in compositions of this type.

Such an adoption occurs only when the deceased was the 556*
owner of a Bella Bella myth and the song in question had been
used to mourn a real or fictitious relative. It is contrary to 769
custom to use the tune or words of a song not composed for a [533]
member of the deceased's ancestral family.

The actual delivering of invitations by the envoys to the [177]
desired guests does not differ from the manner already described, [203]
except that they are asked "to come to visit the sick [donor]."
The significance is, of course, that the mourner's condition is
that of a patient. To indicate the reason of their visit, guests [292]
at a memorial potlatch always wear a little dyed cedar-bark
around their heads.

On arrival, the first party of foreign guests is conducted to
the donor's house, where they make themselves comfortable
in the section allotted to them by the heralds. An elderly 537
Bella Coola chief who is a famous orator has been asked by 556*
the donor to speak, and he rises to do so as soon as his fellow-villagers
have entered and taken their places. No set phrases 769
are used, but the speaker usually begins by reminding all
present of the way in which their ancestors were created in
Nusmät·a, and how all must return thither. It is an occasion
on which eloquence is essential, and the speaker delights in
using as many archaic words and rhetorical expressions as possible,
with constant references to religious beliefs and ancient
history as recorded in mythology. Then he speaks of the death
which is the occasion of the ceremony. If the deceased were [195]
an old man, he is referred to by a special term not in common
usage, *nudak·än*, which implies wisdom and respect as well as
extreme age. The orator states that he has fallen, using the
term *ṗoyäx̣*, normally applied to the thunderous crash of some
mighty tree. He speaks of a young chief as *sxwᵘllämkis*,
short-lived, a person who has been hunted down by the supernatural
Carpenters. He continues by sketching the works of the
deceased, the number of potlatches he gave and the manner
in which his name was known to many tribes. Finally he tells
of the donor's grief, and of how this "sickness" has been alle-

537 viated by the presence of welcome guests. Mention is frequently
* 556 made of the journey taken by the dead man to the
scenes of his ancestral myths. In addition to being an orator,
769 the speaker must also be a *numitl* chief, since it is felt that
[622] none other can have the necessary assurance and poise to refer
to these most sacred and important subjects. During the
speech, assistants blow eagle down over the heads of all
present.

Food has been prepared in advance, and as soon as the
speaker has finished, the heralds call the guests to partake of
it. The first course is then distributed, smoked salmon mixed
[264] with olachen grease. Speeches are sometimes delivered during
this part of the meal, as well as at the second course, cranberries
with more olachen grease. If the guests have arrived during
the afternoon, there is no delay between the feast and the ritual
that follows, but if they have come during the morning, there
is a gap until the evening. Visitors usually time their arrival
for the early part of the afternoon.

537 The next event is a speech from one of the foreign chiefs,
phrased in grandiloquent terms similar to those used by the
* 556 Bella Coola orator. He speaks of the manner in which the
769 supernatural Carpenters have hunted the deceased, but reminds
609 his hearers that this is because *Älquntäm* has decreed it, therefore
all must be for the best. He refers to the dead man's crest,
533 and to the manner in which this guise will be available to him.
During the day, the singers have been careful to learn the tune
of a mourning song used by the ancestral family of each foreign
chief likely to speak. This they now beat out, often assisted
by some of the guests, and always accompanied by their singing.
No one dances to accompany the song; it is merely a
tactful mark of sympathy, implying that the speaker himself
knows the grief occasioned by death, and, also, that he too is
sufficiently important to be able to use a mourning song. If,
as is usually the case, there is more than one influential chief
in the party, a second rises to speak, repeating in different
terms the sentiments expressed by his predecessor. Another

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mourning song is sung for him in the same way. Sometimes as many as five or six speeches are made, each followed by a song of the same type. In such circumstances it is impossible for the Bella Coola musicians to learn all the tunes, but if five or six chiefs are present, it implies the presence of a large delegation among whom are always a number of singers. It is they who really beat out the tunes, assisted by their Bella Coola *confrères*. When the last song has been sung, the guests present their hosts with gifts brought for the purpose. The donor himself receives the most valuable, but all the Bella Coola are remembered, chiefs to a greater extent than commoners. Such gifts are not to be returned; in fact, to do so specifically, especially soon after the receipt, would be insulting. After the distribution the evening concludes with the usual meal.

This ritual is repeated at the arrival of every group of guests. It is uncertain whether or not all the mourning songs are again beaten out after the song of the final speaker of the last group. This seems to have been done occasionally, and the distribution of presents by the guests likewise postponed. Just before the gathering breaks up, the heralds call out:

"*Alnaixwotsnumap.*"

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[609]

This serves as intimation that the Bella Coola rites will take place the following morning, and the guests prepare accordingly. Occasionally, when a man is poor, a memorial potlatch is held without the presence of foreign guests.[16] In such cases the preliminaries just described are, of course, omitted and the above call marks the commencement of the ceremony.

The next day the guests gather in the donor's house, clad in their best. The mourners are in attendance, each conspicuous with the proper mark. In many cases several of them carry miniature totem-poles, carved to represent bird or animal cloaks assumed by the donor's ancestors, and which

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[16] This was probably quite common during the period when all potlatch features were omitted.

556 will now be the forms of the one who has recently died. As
769 soon as all have taken their places, an eloquent chief whose
aid has been requested for the purpose stands up and recounts
[537] the donor's ancestral myth in some detail, mentioning the
source and meaning of the mourners' marks and the designs
of the totem-poles. Then he continues to the effect that the
chief will "cry" by relating the history of his ancestors, which
is also the history of the journey taken by his kinsman, and that
[195] this recital will shore him up. The word used for this, *snutɩlänkɩn*,
is the one commonly employed for raising a heavy
burden with the aid of a lever. Then the singers begin to beat
[533] out the first of the mourning songs, accompanying it with their
voices and assisted by as many of the audience as are familiar
with words and tune. Every effort is made to make the singing
as impressive as possible to add dignity to the recital of the
journey taken by the person who is being commemorated.
The guests listen attentively and are suitably impressed by
the ancestral history of the donor and his family. All the songs
that have been prepared are sung in succession in the same
[535] manner. The lack of dancing distinguishes this type of ceremony[1]
from all others and adds somewhat to its impressiveness.

After the last song is the proper time for validating young
[424] relatives of the donor as mourners. One of the miniature
[425] totem-poles, which are light enough to be carried in the hands,
is brought from the back-room and given to the boy on whom
this prerogative is being conferred. An eloquent speaker
explains the meanings of the designs so displayed and enough
of the family's ancestral history to make clear whence, and
how, they were obtained. The singers begin to beat time
slowly, and the youth endeavours to keep time with his feet,
while he continues to hold the pole.

Meanwhile the donor and his immediate relatives have been
arranging the piles of presents with the inevitable counting and
[537] re-counting. As at a potlatch, a fluent speaker is commissioned
to hold up the objects, state whence they have been obtained,

[1] [i.e. - the memorial potlatch - ANALYST]

to whom they are going, and for what purpose. He says, for 556 *
example: 769

"Fifty skins become nothing on the path of *Kăliăkus*."

Everyone knows that this means the expenditure of that
amount for the singing of a mourning song in connection with [533]
the myth in which *Kăliăkus* appears. Gifts must be given for
each song, and it is the desire of the donor that they be of fitting
value. So, too, is the validation of professional mourners confirmed. [425]
The goods having thus been displayed, a first distribution,
called "Tears" with reference to the donor's grief, is
made, each guest receiving a gift of the same worth. It is not
returnable, being the legalization of the ceremony he has just
witnessed. This is followed by donations to the carpenters,
the singers, the professional mourners, and all others who have [465]
rendered assistance; in essence, these are pay, though they are
always referred to as free-will gifts made in gratitude for services
rendered. Like the last, they are not returnable. Finally,
any goods remaining from the store that has been brought out
are given to chiefs and other influential members of the audience.
Though not clearly stated, the recipients know that
these are really investment-presents; when they reciprocate, [426]
they mention that they are repaying a gift made at a memorial
potlatch. A plentiful meal is now served, during which several
chiefs make complimentary speeches, and the gathering breaks
up.

In former times, when features of the ordinary potlatch
were banned from a memorial potlatch, the ceremony just
described was the central point of the proceedings. It was this
public song-recital of the journey taken by his deceased relative
which alleviated the donor's sorrow and filled him with pride.
A few days after, in the late afternoon, the heralds called back
the guests and the songs were sung and re-sung. Miniature [533]
totem-poles were not used, nor were professional mourners in
evidence; the sole function of the gathering was to provide
opportunity for learning the songs. They were repeated until
far into the night, when a large meal was served and the guests

* 556 departed. A few days later the same ritual was carried out
769 again, with a similar lavish distribution of food. This was often
done at intervals of two or three days for several weeks, depending on how much food the donor was prepared to use.
The amount required was so great that the rite was considered,
in some ways, more difficult than a potlatch.

[178] As already mentioned, however, it became customary in
the last century to incorporate features of the ordinary potlatch into one of a memorial nature. In such cases the first
[533] singing of the mourning songs with display of marks by the
professional mourners is as just recorded, but there is no recalling of the guests merely to listen once more to the songs.
Instead, the ritual differs but slightly from that of an ordinary
potlatch as already described (I, p. 182). An occasion is found
to conduct the guests to the memorial-posts erected, and to inform them of the significance of the designs depicted. This
[178] same practice has been continued since the introduction of
tombstones, and the meaning of the writing upon them is interpreted. The entry of the deceased in the form of his crest, and
the subsequent use of a copper, is the same as already recorded.
This is frequently followed by the singing of a *susaok* mourning
[533] song if one of the near relatives owns this prerogative of foreign
origin. If so, he walks slowly around the fire in a wide circle,
shaking his rattle, and singing, unaccompanied. Most, if not all
[177] of these songs, are in the Bella Bella language and the right to
[425] use one has in every case been obtained through intermarriage
with a member of that tribe. At intervals, heralds call out:

"Listen to the chief's lament."[37]

When presents are distributed to validate the whole ceremony, mention is always made of the different features for
which they are given. As at a potlatch, the most important
is the return of the dead, but at a memorial potlatch another
[211] essential is the display of the memorial-posts. These have been
[764] carved, painted, and set up, but are worthless unless validated

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[37] There is no reason why this should not take place at a potlatch, but no instance of its performance was noted.

by presents, and the greater the number of these, the greater the value of the memorial. Nothing need be added concerning this point, or other rites, to the detailed description given in vol. I, chap. IV. 556+ 769 [211] [764]

Psychologically, the memorial potlatch is of tremendous importance. There may be a vague feeling that the ritual is of actual assistance to the deceased since grease burnt at it reaches him, and is of service to him, but such a belief is no more than an intangible sentiment of no weight in the lives of the people. Quite otherwise is its effect on the survivors, especially on the donor. A memorial potlatch is considered the fitting tribute of respect to a chief, and if none of his near relatives should hold one, they would brand themselves as unmindful of the fame of their dead kinsman. In recent years the white man's law has prohibited the potlatch, but chiefs [648] have often preferred to go to jail rather than to forgo this form of memorial. The reason for this cannot be explained better than in the words of an old man whose only daughter, a "Chieftainess," died in 1922. He determined to hold a memorial potlatch and expressed himself to the writer, as follows:

"If I should fail to do what is right under the circumstances, to do what my ancestors would have done, my heart would be dead, dead as my daughter. But if I call the people, if we sing mourning songs for my child, I will be able to bear my grief. I shall have done what is right, and will be able to hold up my head with anyone, knowing that the rites have been performed for my child which are due her as a chief. If I allow her to be neglected, I would be ashamed and miserable. Jim [another "chief"] warned me when I first told him of my intention that the law forbade such ceremonies. I cannot help that. If I am sent to jail, to jail shall I go. I would rather have that happen than that my daughter should not receive fitting treatment as a chief."

In this case, though only abbreviated rites were carried out, their performance unquestionably lessened the father's grief, a fact observed on several occasions. Not only does it comfort

556 769 a man and assuage his sorrow to know that he has shown fitting respect to the dead, there is also a gain in social prestige. As the whole community respects, admires, and sometimes envies a man for having carried out a memorial potlatch, there is no doubt that he is pleased and gratified to such an extent that his grief is dulled. These two factors must constantly be kept in mind; memorial potlatches serve to commemorate the dead, but in so doing they add to the social importance of the donors. The two combine to bring considerable comfort to the chief who has lost a dear relative. In some cases the social prestige is the real motive, the grief assumed and unimportant; but in others the latter is the only factor that matters, and a chief is entirely oblivious to any increase in his own status. In most memorial potlatches, both feelings are present in the mind of the donor, and both are gratified.

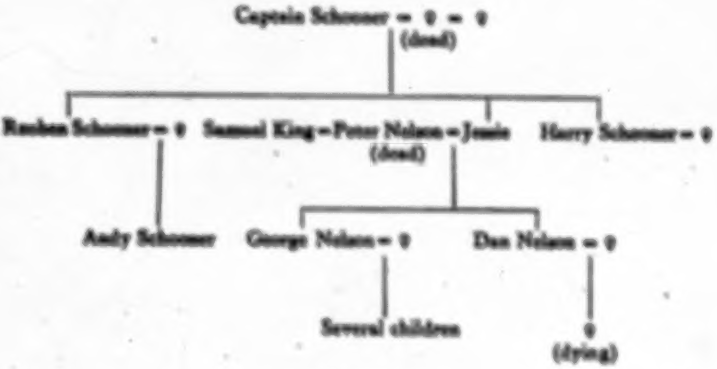
DETAILED ACCOUNT OF A FUNERAL

764 114 In the preceding pages, an attempt has been made to describe the traditional death rites of the Bella Coola. The following section comprises a detailed account of funeral ceremonies witnessed in 1922. The contrast between these and [178] [182] [571] the ones already recorded, will indicate some of the changes in custom which are of such importance in studies of cultural growth or decline. The following description will also serve to demonstrate a point repeatedly mentioned, the manner in which business transactions and arrangements of all kinds take place whenever the people have been called together.

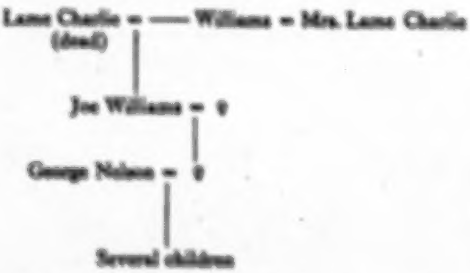
[123] On June 27, 1922, the death occurred in Bella Coola of Jessie, Mrs. Samuel King, daughter of Captain Schooner. The latter, now deceased, was one of the writer's most trusted friends, and as a result of this friendship it was possible not only to attend the actual rites, but to ascertain much of the feeling underlying them. This advantage had its drawbacks, since it was manifestly impossible to question either the father or the husband of the woman too closely. The details will be de-

scribed, in spite of some repetition entailed thereby, both to 764
record customs surviving the decay of Bella Coola ritual, and [114]
as a means of illustrating the sentiments of the participants. To avoid native terminology, white man's names will be used throughout. It will be necessary to understand the relationships of those taking part in the ceremony, as shown in the 601
following pedigrees: 764

PEDIGREE I[18]


Captain Schooner = ♀ = ♀
(dead)
Reuben Schooner = ♀
Samuel King = Peter Nelson = Jessie
(dead)
Harry Schooner = ♀
Andy Schooner
George Nelson = ♀
Dan Nelson = ♀
Several children
♀
(dying)

PEDIGREE II


Lame Charlie = —— Williams = Mrs. Lame Charlie
(dead)
Joe Williams = ♀
George Nelson = ♀
Several children

Samuel King was a widower with one daughter at the time 764
of his marriage to Jessie, by whom he had no children. His 159

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[18] No attempt has been made to record the complete pedigrees; only those who took part in the ceremony are indicated.

764 stepson, George Nelson, had not been living with his wife for
159 about one year.

Early in the afternoon of June 27, Captain Schooner was
notified by telephone of the serious illness of his daughter at
the cannery where she was working. He set out immediately,
but found her dead on his arrival. Without waiting to consult
Samuel King, he called together the chiefs who happened to be
[622] in the vicinity, Willie Mack, Jim Pollard, Billy Pollard, Bobby
Nebby, and Alexander Clallaman.[19] He informed them that
764 he did not propose to let his daughter be thrown carelessly into
769 the ground like a dog, but that he was going to hold a memorial
potlatch immediately after the funeral. Schooner, being a
*556 *numitl* chief as well as father of the dead woman, was able to
159 do as he liked, and no one objected to this plan, although in
[178] former times such a ceremony neither took place at once, nor
in summer. If Samuel had been present, he would have been
consulted as a matter of course. It was quite fitting for Jessie
to be buried by her father, since she had borne her husband no
children, and had been rebought several times. Moreover,
Samuel lacked the determination and prestige of his father-in-law. Having settled this main point, Captain Schooner intimated that as Jessie's granddaughter, Dan Nelson's infant, was at the point of death, it would be well to combine the mourning for both at the single ceremony. No mention was made of the amount to be used for the rite. Schooner himself had $200 to expend for the purpose which would have been sufficient, and his attitude was that he neither knew nor cared whether his relatives would assist him. Soon after the other chiefs had left, Reuben Schooner arrived from the logging-camp from which he had been summoned. Father and son discussed arrangements not only for the actual interment, a simple matter, but for the memorial potlatch. It was decided that the dead woman should return as a composite figure consisting

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[19] None of these was closely related to the Schooner family.

of Eagle, Raven, and Blackfish, three of her crests of which 764
the masks were available. They agreed that Timothy Snow[illegible] 769
was the best carpenter available and that he should be com-
missioned to put them in shape and arrange their use. Reuben 556*
wanted to sing a *susaek* mourning song, to which he had a pre- 159
rogative derived from his Bella Bella mother, and it was also [533]
decided that the band[illegible] should play. Reuben informed his
father that he would contribute $60 towards the expenditure.

Meanwhile Jessie had been washed by female friends, clad 764
in her best clothing, and laid in her coffin. This was a rough
box, contributed by the manager of the cannery and shaped 159
like a white man's coffin. At intervals, women came near and
wailed dolorously without heeding others similarly engaged.
The news was carried to all the Bella Coola, those men who [203]
owned gasoline launches taking the word to the logging-camps
without being requested to do so. A Carrier Indian who hap-
pened to be returning from the cannery spread the word
through the village, where each woman who received the
message hurried off to some friend, with whom she began to
wail.

Early on the following morning, Captain Schooner returned
home with his wife, Jessie's stepmother. He had been crying
and was sad, but seemed willing to talk. He spoke of the
proposed memorial potlatch, and expressed the sentiments [769]
recorded on vol. I, p. 473. He was grave and dignified, abso-
lutely determined to perform what he considered to be the neces-
sary ritual, oblivious of consequences, and heedless of what
he held to be an unjust law. During that summer, Captain [273]
Schooner had been a rather heavy drinker, but on this occasion
he abstained from wine, and said that he hoped no one would
show disrespect to his daughter by appearing in a drunken con-
dition either at the funeral or the subsequent rites. It is

[illegible] He was not closely related to the Schooners.

[illegible] Most of the younger Bella Coola were members of the band, performing white man's music on white man's instruments. Andy Schooner was bandmaster, but it is unlikely that this influenced the decision, since the performance of the band was customary at funerals when the writer was in Bella Coola. [176]

764 worthy of record that his wishes were scrupulously obeyed.
159 During the morning he was visited by the singers and other
chiefs to discuss details of the coming ceremonial.

Meanwhile Samuel King had been summoned from his
764 logging-camp. He wished to show his own grief, and also his
159 sorrow that the union between his family and the Schooners,
forged by his marriage to Jessie, should be terminated. No
584 children had been born to cement the bond. He consulted his
brother and sister, who agreed with him that a marriage between his daughter, by a former wife, and George Nelson would
be desirable. The girl was consulted and raised no objections.
[769] Samuel then addressed Captain Schooner who was favourably
disposed, so it was decided that this ceremony should take
*[556] place in connection with the memorial potlatch. It would be
a real, not a fictitious marriage, as the girl had reached adolescence several years previously.

764 Another visitor to Captain Schooner that morning was
159 Joe Williams. Several years earlier, when he had given a
ceremony in honour of two of his children who had died,
Captain Schooner had contributed $100 as "A Blanket for
George Nelson's Wife." This was really part of the marriage
[583] transaction, although deferred for a number of years after the
actual time of the wedding. This sum had been divided as follows: $20 to Joe Williams; $20 to Mrs. Joe Williams; $10 to Mrs. George Nelson; $10 to her brother; $20 to Lame Charlie; and $20 to Mrs. Lame Charlie. Joe consulted the recipients and found that all were willing to repay their indebtedness at this time. Captain Schooner did not ask for it, but Joe was glad of the opportunity to do the proper thing at the right time and thus rise in popular estimation. He and his relatives decided to return $150, a sum which he mentioned to Captain Schooner that morning.

[583] Joe Williams, his wife, and Mrs. George Nelson also decided
to take advantage of the gathering to rebuy the last named
from her husband. The fact that they had been separated for
at least a year and that the woman had been living an immoral

life did not alter the necessity of rebuying her "to make good the path" of her children. For this purpose they decided to give a copper and a sum of money; it was impossible to learn the exact amount. Joe told Captain Schooner of their intention. 764 150 [583]

About noon the body was brought in a canoe from the cannery in its closed coffin and lifted ashore at a convenient spot near the cemetery. Those manning the canoe were young men who happened to be at the cannery, irrespective of whether or not they were related to Jessie. The coffin was laid on a grassy place and Captain Schooner seated himself beside it. People were passing and repassing, some sat down for a time, then moved off to dinner. Occasionally, a woman would sit and wail, the most constant being Reuben's married daughter; Captain Schooner moved around talking to his friends amidst the eerie wailing. About 1.30 P.M. everyone in the village had assembled, including a number of Carrier Indians, anxious to see the sight. Captain Schooner withdrew to his house after asking Bobby Nebby to summon the chiefs to meet him there. The messenger, who thus acted as herald, went around the [203] gathering whispering to each; in addition to those notified at the cannery the preceding evening he called all the older and most influential Bella Coola, Albert King, Samuel King, Joe Williams, Joshua Moody, Alec Davis, Lame Charlie, Judas, and Nebuchadnezzar. Captain Schooner requested the last named, an important chief, to take charge of the ceremony. At this time Samuel King told Nebuchadnezzar, who informed the others, what had been arranged for his daughter and they agreed that it was good. It was tacitly assumed that George [584] Nelson would be delighted; probably he had been on friendly terms with the girl for some time. Joe Williams also told Nebuchadnezzar the two business propositions that he intended to carry out, the return of the money to Captain Schooner, and the rebuying of his daughter. Nebuchadnezzar informed the people concerned. At this meeting it was decided that various chiefs should speak after the Christian [587] service at the grave.

764 159 Meanwhile the rest of the porulation was sitting near the coffin. They wore no special dress or other mark of grief. Samuel King and some of his relatives had brought bundles containing Jessie's clothing, pots, pans, and other personal possessions, which they set down near the coffin. About two [533] [177] o'clock the band gathered and began to play, the favourite selection being "Annie Laurie." This went on for some time after the return of the chiefs from Captain Schooner's house. They had decided that *Tāl-io* Jenny, one of Captain Schooner's distant relatives, should carry the fire in front of the body. When all was ready she lit a bundle of rags, placed it in a pot, and set off for the cemetery, followed by all in a straggling and orderless procession. Some strong young men bore the coffin, for Jessie must have weighed over two hundred pounds; some brought tools for digging the grave; others took the bundles of clothing. There was no fixed allotment of tasks; a man or woman carried anything or nothing according to his or her wish.

The cemetery is situated about fifty yards behind the old village of *Qomqo·ts*. The heavy timber has all been cut away and second growth has sprung up everywhere except around the newer graves. Captain Schooner had decided that his daughter should be buried near several of her relatives, and it was to this spot that Jenny led the procession. She set the pot down near the site of the grave, and the coffin likewise was placed on the ground nearby. Captain Schooner, Jim Pollard, and a few of the other old men chose the exact situation and a number of the young men began to dig. Jenny, and other women, added pieces of Jessie's clothing to the fire so that a constant small blaze was kept up. As the grave was being dug [533] the band performed at intervals, while the women sat wailing near the fire. Other men and women were seated on the ground or walking around idly near the grave, talking but [852] seldom laughing, while the Carriers were a little farther away. Children were playing around. The grave was dug about five feet deep, in shape corresponding to the coffin, but orientation

was not carefully observed. Those wishing to dig took turns 764
with the tools; there was no supervision, and no orders given. 159
When the grave was ready, Jim Pollard asked Judas to perform
the rite with the spruce bough, which he did with a branch
brought by one of the youths. The young men lowered the [533]
coffin into the grave while the band continued to play. The
missionary then read the Christian burial service, after which [797]
he withdrew. Some of the young men brought planks from old
houses near-by, sawed them to the size of the grave and laid
them over the coffin as a cover. At this juncture Judas, one of 764
the oldest and most conservative of the Bella Coola, rose to 159
speak. First he offered consolation to the mourning relatives 537
by pointing out that all must travel the same road. Then he
spoke to Jessie, telling her not to linger, but to travel back the
path of her ancestors from generation to generation until she
reached the place where they first came down from above, and
thence to ascend to *Nusmāt·a*. It was impossible to obtain a
literal translation of the speech, which was punctuated by calls
of "*Ye··*" from the male Bella Coola. The next speaker was
Jim Pollard, the most influential Kimsquit and a personal
friend, though not a relative, of Captain Schooner's.

"Go," he said to the dead woman, "Go to the localities from which came your first forefathers in the beginning of time. There you will find your most valuable ancestral possessions. Go at once, do not linger and lose yourself on the road from generation to generation."

Turning to George Nelson, he went on, "Do not be downhearted, all of us must travel the same road. It was made by no man, it is the work of *Ālquntām*."

Looking back once more to the grave, he said, "In *Q̣omqo·ts* are buried many illustrious relatives of yours. You will be among friends, whereas we are left to lament your departure."

It was impossible to write down the words at the time and
the above record is not literally correct, although it expresses [126]
the gist of the speech.

Captain Schooner whispered to Robert Hood, another of the 764

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764 older Bella Coola, asking him to announce that he, Schooner,
159 with Dan and George, was going to hold a memorial potlatch
that evening to which all were invited. Robert is not a herald
[203] but undertook this duty owing to the absence of qualified
[769] heralds. Meanwhile the grave had been filled in and the
*[556] people began to drift away as it rose to ground level. Their
attitude throughout had resembled that of white people at a
funeral, and the hilariousness that characterizes so many
[852] Bella Coola gatherings was entirely absent except among the
playing children. By 4.30 P.M. all had left the scene.

769 In view of the large number of guests expected it had been
decided to hold the memorial potlatch, not in one of the old-
*556 fashioned houses, but in the village hall, built according to the
[344] white man's style of architecture and illuminated with swinging
[354] gasoline lamps. This is a large, rectangular building, undivided
by partitions, with a stage at one end and a door at the other.
[533] About 6.30 P.M. the singers, Nebuchadnezzar, Jim Pollard,
Billy Pollard, Alec Davis, Kimsquit Alec, and Robert Hood,
gathered at the hall and seated themselves below the stage.
Billy Pollard had prepared a mourning song during the day,
Kimsquit Alec another, and it was decided to use two others
that were well known to all. The singers sat and practised
these four for some time, while at intervals various Bella Coola
strolled in, listened for a few minutes, then walked out again.
Anyone was allowed to do so, but few availed themselves of
the opportunity. Meanwhile Captain Schooner had brought
264 $10 worth of rice, raisins, and condensed milk which he placed
769 beside a huge iron cauldron outside the front door. Jim To-
*556 Morrow, a Bella Coola of no great intelligence, volunteered to
act as cook and soon had a fire blazing and the food boiling.

About 8.00 P.M. the people began to assemble, bringing their own plates and other utensils. After considerable delay and chatter, the guests took their places in the hall, seating themselves regardless of rank on benches ranged along the two side walls and massed at the rear. By mutual consent a portion of the single row of benches along the left wall was reserved

for the Carriers and other foreigners. The cook began to ladle 769
the rice into basins provided by Captain Schooner; these were 556*
taken by some of the younger men who poured helpings into
the dishes of the guests. Spoons had been forgotten, and there 264
was delay until these were provided by slivers split from a
block of wood for the purpose. Contrary to ancient usage, no
attempt was made to serve food to the guests in order of their [178]
rank. Men, women, and children were sitting everywhere, the
infants kept moving around and crying continually throughout [852]
the performance, but no one seemed to be disturbed thereby.

When everyone had eaten, Nebuchadnezzar, who had been 769
sitting facing the other singers, beat on the floor to attract
attention and then rose to speak. He asked the help of all to 556*
make the ceremony a success, and thus assuage the grief of the
bereaved relatives.

Joe Williams and his daughter had taken their places on 769
the right-hand side of the hall and had requested Willie Mack,
a fluent speaker and influential chief, to assist them in announ- 556*
cing the financial transactions. They spread a blanket on the 583
floor on which the bills were counted, and beside this Willie [537]
knelt. Joe gave him a sum of money, which was counted and
re-counted; Willie then held it up in the vain hope that it could
be seen by everyone in the hall. He announced the amount,
also that it was to rebuy (the divorced) Mrs. George Nelson
from her late husband, and that it would "make clean the
place where she sat." A young man delivered the money to
George who added it to the general stock for later distribution.
Next a copper was produced, held up, and presented to him
for the same purpose. Meanwhile Joe, assisted by his mother 769
and other relatives, had been counting the money which they
proposed to give to Captain Schooner in settlement of the pre- 556*
viously contracted debt. One hundred and fifty dollars were
produced and handed to Willie Mack, who held them up and
announced that it was in return for the $100 given by Captain
Schooner on a previous occasion to Joe Williams, his wife, his
son, his daughter, his mother, and his stepfather. The bills

769 were taken by one of the younger men to Captain Schooner,
*556 who accepted them without showing either gratitude or the
reverse; this return was a matter that concerned the Williams family, not the Schooners. After a short delay, Billy Pollard moved over to the group and spoke to Joe and Willie Mack,
[583] to whom he gave $10. The latter stated that this sum, which he held up, and a horse, which was not produced, were being given to George Nelson to rebuy his (divorced) wife. Billy is not related to the woman, but had long been friendly and wished to share in making good the path for her children. This matter had not been previously broached. The choice of
[537] Willie Mack as announcer was made merely because he was a fluent speaker and, as a chief, had the necessary self-confidence to act fittingly.

769 *556 537 *After these preliminaries, the main rite* was begun. Jim Pollard, an eloquent chief unrelated to any of the principals, spoke at some length describing the journey taken by Jessie to visit the scenes of her ancestral myths. He was followed by a Bella Bella chief who happened to be in Bella Coola at the time. In the Chinook jargon he first expressed his sympathy and respect for Captain Schooner because he was carrying out the fitting rites, then asked leave to speak in Bella Bella because he found it difficult to express himself in Chinook. He described the journey which the deceased had taken owing to her membership in the ancestral family of her mother, a Bella Bella woman. No one paid much attention to the speeches; in fact, it was impossible at the back of the hall to hear what was said owing to the chattering and crying of children.

769 *556 533 After considerable delay, the singers decided it was time to sing the first mourning song. It had never before been used, although the composer, Billy Pollard, had prepared it several years earlier and had merely altered the words during the morning after consulting Captain Schooner about his ancestral myths. The singers had learnt text and tune during the rehearsal a few hours before. It was impossible to record it in detail; in outline, it consisted of the words:

"Child, you are an eagle now. You are like *Xemcua.*[32] He 769
will provide an eagle cloak for you."

The theme was continued throughout as if Captain 556*
Schooner were speaking and lamenting his daughter. At 533
intervals the phrase was repeated, "My child has fled home." The leader of the singers, Jim Pollard in this case, kept calling out to the audience to cry and sing, and as many of them joined in as had come in earlier to listen to the words. The whole effect was strikingly dignified and impressive.

Captain Schooner joined the singers for the second mourning song, since he alone was familiar with the details of the ancestral myth which formed the theme. In former times a [178]
bereaved parent would never have been obliged to assist in this way. Kimsquit Alec had composed the tune during the day and Billy Pollard called out the words, line by line, inviting the guests to join in. The theme consisted of instructions to Jessie:

"Go," it ran, "To the mountain whither *Q̣eil*[33] came. Thence travel to the Skeena where you will assume the form of a whale and be able to spout like one.[34] Go then to the far north where you will enter the copper house within which dwells a copper raven and where the salmon are *taitaimx̣*."[35]

This song was sung in the manner already described.

The third mourning song was one composed for a *Täl·io* chief, *Smaoexek*, who had lost his daughter during the smallpox epidemic. Its use was justifiable, as *Smaoexek* was Jessie's mother's mother's mother's brother. It had a double significance since the dead woman's mother had allowed it to be used when lamenting the death of a brother of Samuel King, a member of the same ancestral family. Captain Schooner had altered the words to make them applicable to the present situation. The theme was:

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[32] One of the first settlers of the earth, an ancestor of Jessie.

[33] Another of her first ancestors.

[34] One of Jessie's first ancestors had landed on the Skeena and there assumed the form and characteristics of a whale.

[35] An incident in one of Jessie's ancestral myths.

769 "Please stop crying. We have made good your memory.
*556 You are a light to your brother. Go to *Smaoexek* where he
stands among the abalone-shells far to the south.[36] Thence go
533 overland to Rivers Inlet where a *sķämtsk* will serve as canoe
for you.[37] You will see the long house where your ancestor
obtained shaman's power."[38]

Meanwhile Reuben Schooner had been out of sight behind
the curtain of the stage. After a short interval, he emerged
[292] wearing a blue blanket decorated with mother-of-pearl buttons
sewn on in raven design. He was followed by two other influential
members of the *susaok* society, Alexander Clallaman and
Nebuchadnezzar, similarly attired. Reuben began to sing in
a low, sad, penetrating voice of considerable musical power
and, followed by the other two, walked slowly in a sunwise
circle around the hall, all the time shaking his right hand, held
projecting outwards at right angles from his elbow. The song
was in Bella Bella, and even the singer did not fully understand
the meaning, and few of the audience had any idea of its significance.
When the three had almost completed the first circuit,
someone brought Reuben a rattle, which he clutched in his
right hand as he continued his way. The reason of the shaking
at once became evident; he should have had a rattle through-
[178] out but few of these were left in Bella Coola at the time and it
had not been possible to borrow one before beginning his song.
Again the three slowly circled the hall, Alexander and Nebuchadnezzar
calling out at intervals:

"Listen to the mourning song of the chief."

After the second circuit of the hall, Reuben paused near
the singers and spoke to Alec Davis, a *susaok siki*. The latter
[424] rose and stated how the prerogative of *siki*, including the right
to sing, unaccompanied, a mourning song on occasions such as
this had been transmitted both to Reuben and his brother
Harry from *Ao·sti*, a Bella Bella chief to whom they were

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[36] An incident in one of Jessie's ancestral myths.
[37] An incident in one of Jessie's ancestral myths.
[38] An incident in one of Jessie's ancestral myths.

related through their mother. After a little further discussion, 769
Harry took the rattle from his brother and began to sing as he 556*
walked around the hall, followed by Alexander and Nebuchadnezzar. 533
Harry was less familiar than his brother with
the proper words, but supplied this deficiency by humming. [424]
He was also less at ease, and he lacked the musical ability which had made his brother's singing so impressive. After a single circuit, he restored the rattle to Reuben, who continued to go around the hall as he sang. This time he paused at intervals, and kept glancing towards the door, his whole attitude betraying that something was interfering with the previously arranged plans. The purpose of the singing was to summon the dead woman in the form of her crest, but she did not appear. In early times those who were not *sisauk* were told that the words and music penetrated to the upper regions,
reminding the deceased of the grief of his relatives and per-
suading him to return. This belief had passed away at the [178]
time of the ceremony here described, but the fiction was
continued, and it had been planned that the representation of
the deceased should enter when the song was finished. It later [609]
transpired that the delay was due to a number of white people who, having gathered at the doorway, made the performer unwilling to put on his masks and disguise. Reuben continued to sing half-heartedly, and finally cried out:

"Perhaps I have lost my power, it does not come."

Alec Davis, who had previously left the hall, came rushing in and called out in a loud voice:

"*Qomotla* [Jessie's ancestral name and the one in connection with which she had been made a chief] is coming. She has been to the scenes of her ancestral myths. Her crests have taken her. She comes as Eagle, Raven, and Blackfish, bearing her grandchild."[39]

The speaker is a morose, rather surly individual, usually 769
undignified and often drunk, but on this occasion his manner 556*
had changed in a remarkable degree. His eyes were bright, his

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[39] Although not yet dead, all hope had been abandoned for the child's recovery.

769 expression animated, and, except for his dirty European clothing,
he looked and acted like a religious dignitary taking part
*556 in an important ceremony, as was indeed the case. While he
was speaking there came from without eerie notes of the large,
cone-shaped whistles, combined with the yelping scream of an
eagle. The effect, even on an audience which knew that these
sounds were of human origin, was tremendous. Men and
women stiffened in their seats and craned their necks to see
what was taking place near the door. A number of the younger
769 men had slipped away during Reuben's singing to help the
*556 masked dancer with his disguise. As some of these assistants
continued to blow their whistles, others held up blankets to
535 conceal the necessarily clumsy entrance of the performer
through the narrow doorway.

These were dropped after a moment, and out into the centre
of the open hall bounded a figure covered with a large white
sheet so that only his bare feet were visible. On his head was
[532] an eagle mask, from the upper part of his back projected a
blackfish, while the head of a raven peered forth from his chest.
The dancer, Timothy Snow, who had been chosen for his skill in such matters, leapt forward in a crouching attitude and took a few short, mincing steps as if he were a gigantic eagle hopping on the ground. At once the older Bella Coola women began to drone out, "*i* · · · · ," and continued as long as the performer remained in the hall. He bent down and turned slowly, sunwise, with arms pressed close to his body and neck contracted, then straightened, and took a few more mincing steps, followed by another turn. In this way he moved in a wide, sunwise circle around the hall, avoiding the middle where there would have been a fire in one of the old-fashioned houses. At intervals he raised himself on his toes and slightly spread his arms beneath the sheet, at the same time looking up so that it appeared as if the eagle were rising to gaze at an object in the distance as a sitting bird does so frequently. This brought the raven mask into plain sight. After a survey of this kind, he bent down and ran a few yards more. Alec Davis and two other *sisauk* fol-

lowed the actor, blowing eagle down over him repeatedly. After 769
one circuit of the hall, the performer passed out through the 556*
front door, from the vicinity of which was heard once more the 535
large whistles and the screaming of the eagle, both growing less
distinct as if the bird were flying away.

The wearer of the mask displayed considerable dramatic
talent and succeeded in giving a realistic display in spite of the
glaring lights which exposed his bare feet and betrayed the
human handicraft of the mask in a manner impossible in the
native type of house with a single, central fire as the sole illumination.
The Carriers had watched the performance with 769
interest, probably tinged with contempt, but to the Bella
Coola it was no mere spectacle, it was a religious rite of the 556*
highest importance. All the spectators realized that the
figure was human, but this seemed inconsequential as they
gazed upon the representation of the dead woman in the form
of her crests, to which they believed she had been transformed
by death. Even the children were silent, and the only sound
during the passage was the wailing of a sleepy infant. The 769
eagle crest belonged to Jessie by virtue of membership in the
ancestral family descended from her father's first ancestor, 556*
traced patrilineally, who had come to earth at *Tcımotl* in the 424
form of this bird. The blackfish was a crest acquired through 178
her mother; the raven represented a copper raven belonging
to an ancestral myth of the dying grandchild. In former times,
carpenters would have worked for weeks preparing an elaborate
composite figure, but Captain Schooner wished no delay
in the ceremony for fear of police interference, so that it was
necessary to use what masks happened to be in existence and
to place them in conjunction by means of the crude white
sheet. Jessie had not been initiated into the *sısaok* society, [575]
but no opposition was raised to the use of *sısaok* whistles both [622]
on account of her status as chief, and owing to the influence
of her father who, a *numitl* chief, feared no restrictions and
heeded no conventions. Besides, both her brothers were influ-

769
*556 ential *sısaok*. In former times it is certain that objections would have been raised to this breach of ceremonial privilege.

[424] There was a pause for several minutes after the withdrawal
[178] of the figure. Then Reuben threw a copper on the floor in the
[575] track taken by the actor "to make bone for the dead woman."
A number of chiefs went forward to join the singers and discuss
[622] whether or not the copper should be redeemed. No one wished
to do so, so Captain Schooner said he would have it fastened
to a post over Jessie's grave, a proposition to which all agreed.

769 After interminable discussion in which Captain Schooner,
Nebuchadnezzar, Reuben Schooner, Jim Pollard, and Alec
*556 Davis took the principal parts, it was decided to sing the fourth
533 mourning song at this point. There was no reason why this
should not have been done at the customary time, after the
other three, but wide latitude in detail was allowed in this
[178] ceremony; in fact, exact ritual never flourished in Bella Coola
and has become increasingly rare in recent years. This song
had been composed a number of years previously when Captain
Schooner had called in the Bella Bella to a memorial potlatch,
and great care had been expended on its composition owing to
the skill of the guests in songs of this type. The words, altered
to fit the circumstances, were phrased as if George and Dan
were lamenting the loss of their mother and other relatives.

"I, we," they ran, "are thinking of our mother, our brothers, our sisters, our mother's brothers, our mother's sisters, our father's brothers, our father's sisters, of all our dead relatives. Please, ye chiefs from abroad, turn your heads, listen to our wail. You revered great ones, let us all cry together. It is we who have called you hither; look upon us."

This song was sung in the manner already described, except that more of the Bella Coola were familiar with the words and tune and could accordingly join in.

Meanwhile Captain Schooner, with his sons Reuben and
769 Harry and his grandsons George Nelson and Andy Schooner,
*556 had been crouching in a corner of the hall, poring over the
money which was to be distributed to validate the ceremony,

and deciding how to divide it. Harry Schooner is neither 769
dominant nor capable, and Andy acted only as clerk, so the 556*
actual decision rested with Captain Schooner, Reuben, and
George. Daniel Nelson would normally have played a prominent part, but he was absent owing to the illness of his infant
daughter. Samuel King joined the group, bringing with him 769
two coppers, two rifles, and a sum of money, and whispered
the purpose of this contribution. 556*

After the usual pause, George Nelson and Captain 583
Schooner, the latter substituting for the absent Dan Nelson, stood up and walked around the hall carrying three coppers and two rifles. Then they returned to their places.

Nebuchadnezzar had been asked by Captain Schooner to [537]
act as announcer on account of his good voice and self-confidence. He joined the group in the corner to call out whatever they whispered to him. First he stated that one of the coppers just displayed had been given to George Nelson to rebuy from him his wife, Joe Williams' daughter. He explained that the other two, as well as the rifles, were presents from Samuel King, assisted by his brother, Albert, and his sister, Mrs. Alexander Clallaman, to George Nelson in consequence of the latter's marriage to Samuel King's daughter. This arrangement having been initiated by the relatives of the girl, it was fitting that they should give the first presents.

Captain Schooner had first planned to expend $200 to 769
validate the return of his dead daughter. His wife gave him 556*
$20 for the purpose, and when Joe Williams returned $150, he decided to use only $100 of his savings, making $270 in all. To this Reuben added $60, Harry $40, and Dan Nelson $40, increasing the total to $410. George contributed what he had received from Joe Williams for the repurchase of the latter's daughter, as well as what Samuel King had just given him. Samuel added to the pile some money belonging to Jessie,[44]

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[44] The writer could not learn why this money had not been destroyed with her other possessions. The reason may have been that the Bella Coola knew that, though a potlatch was illegal, the goods of a dead person could be distributed and by doing this at a ceremony they hoped for no interference from the law.

769 these various amounts making $864 when added to the previous $410."

*556 It was first decided to give a present to everyone as "Eagle Down Shaken Off by the Dead Woman." Captain Schooner and his assistants thought first of the bottom house in the village, remembered who lived in it, then, after a little more discussion, agreed upon the amount each should receive. This was whispered to Nebuchadnezzar, who held up a bill and called out, for example:

"$10 for so-and-so."

A number of young men had volunteered as messengers and one of them took the money to the designated recipient. After giving to all in the bottom house, they passed to the next above it, and so in succession for the whole village. Absentees were remembered and their presents received by friends or relatives. *Kusiut* names were used because Nebuchadnezzar was unfamiliar with the little-used ancestral designations. Contrary to ancient usage, the amounts varied; some chiefs received as much as $20, a child, $1, or 50 cents. Each recipient accepted his gift without showing whether it was more or less than he had expected. There was not sufficient change, so that five persons were often named together and a $5 bill given to the first mentioned for sharing with the other four, a transaction always carried out honestly. Many of the Carriers
[609] were strangers, so they could not be rewarded in accordance with their rank, but $50 was given to one of their chiefs to share as he thought fit.

465 Not all the money was distributed in this way. Payments
769 had to be made to those who had assisted at the funeral. Gifts
were bestowed upon the women who had washed and dressed
*556 the corpse; to the men who had helped to make the coffin; to
764 the canoe-men who had brought the body to Bella Coola; to
the pall-bearers; to the grave-diggers; to the woman who had
carried the fire; to the singers, especially to those who had

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*The exact sums contributed by Samuel King and George Nelson could not be learnt.

composed the tunes used; to the carpenter who had prepared 465
and used the masked figure; to the members of the band,
including a payment for their services whenever Dan Nelson's 769
child should die; to a carpenter to erect a fence around the 556*
grave; to another to cut the representation of an eagle on a [764]
stone to be erected over the grave; to the speakers at the funeral; to the speakers at the rite then taking place; to those who delivered the money; to the youth who, with pencil and paper, assisted in keeping accounts; to the cook, and to all others who had assisted in any manner. In every case the amount was announced, the bill held up, the name of the recipient stated, the reason for his reward, and the money was then taken to him by a messenger. Captain Schooner really decided how much each should receive, he being in the best position to judge what was suitable, and there being no fixed scale of charges to help him. Work paid for in advance, such as the erection of the fence, was carefully carried out.

A little money had been kept to validate the assumption 769
of ancestral names by several children of the Schooner family. 556*
Everyone received a small amount, a child sometimes as
trifling a sum as 25 cents. Captain Schooner had virtually 553
chosen who was to receive which designation, although he 425
received advice from all his relatives. Harry Schooner's infant was given the name, *Pätcätcus*, a reference to the manner in which the first beams of the morning sun strike the lofty summit of Mount *Nusq̓alst*. Reuben's son was called *ellmäls*, a *Snulle·tl* designation connected with the crash when the first *Sonx̣ʷ* fell. The myths in which these names were embodied were not expounded; in fact, they had been almost forgotten, even by Captain Schooner. *Täl·io* Jenny wished to transmit one of her names to Andy Schooner's infant; this was announced in the same way as the others and validated with them by the gifts to all. Jenny had not contributed to the common stock, but some of it was used with the understanding that she would later repay. Nebuchadnezzar announced the

769 sum being used for each name, and the bills were displayed
*556 before messengers carried them to the recipients.

553 Finally, Jim Pollard took the opportunity to bestow on
Captain Schooner the name, *Snusulkāls*. This designation
425 was the property of the donor's ancestral family and should
[614] not have been transmitted without the consent of all its mem-
bers. Jim had probably informed several of them of his
[622] intention, but no objections would have been raised if he had
overlooked this courtesy, since he is the only *numitl* chief
among them, and the only one with determination and prestige. It was not an outright gift, since it was announced that it must be returned to the donor's family on Captain Schooner's death. Jim Pollard acted as his own announcer for this transaction, explaining that he gave the name in gratitude for the help which Captain Schooner had rendered at the death of his, Jim's, father about twenty years before. He promised that at the earliest opportunity he would give presents to validate the transmission.

769 During the lengthy distribution of money, the audience had
shown unmistakable signs of weariness. It was now between
*556 2.00 and 3.00 A.M., and as soon as Jim had finished speaking
the guests dispersed quietly, though many of them gathered in groups in one another's houses to discuss what had taken place.

Captain Schooner slept late after the lengthy ceremony, but was proud and contented when interviewed about noon. He felt that what was fitting for his daughter had been performed, and was willing to take the consequences of having broken the law.

768 Little else of note occurred in connection with Jessie's
funeral. Samuel King deposited near her grave a sewing-machine which his wife had used for only a short time and Captain Schooner decided to replace this with an older one belonging to his wife. He made this exchange on the afternoon of June 30, when Samuel, in company with a number of women, was burning the rest of Jessie's clothing and possessions. Captain Schooner explained his act by saying:

"She was my daughter, I have a right to do as I like." 968

Samuel King and the others accepted the exchange as a matter of course and made no comments. Captain Schooner took no part in the burning of his daughter's goods, this being the task of those with whom she had been living, and who accordingly knew which were hers. The fire was kindled by a married daughter of Reuben Schooner, though it could have been done equally well by any woman. On the following 783 morning, July 1, Samuel King went with a friend to the forest 964 and passed four times through a small spruce sapling bent into an arch. This was the last incident in the funeral rites.

Fate of the Dead

LIFE OF THE DEAD

Little need be added to the account given in vol. I, chap. 975 II of the fate of those parts of a man which go at death to *Nusmāt-a*. The spirit and the life travel back the path of the deceased's ancestors from generation to generation until they reach the place where his first forefather came to earth and where his cloak, if he had worn one, floated back after his alteration to human form. When the spirit and the life of a descendant reach the spot, they change into a being having the form of the cloak, and so return to *Nusmāt-a*. The spirit and the life of one who is a member of several ancestral families visit the localities where the transformations to human shape of all his ancestors occurred. The Bella Coola believe that these two elements can assume many crest forms, but they do not know whether this entails the simultaneous assumption of many shapes to comprise a composite figure; or whether the spirit and the life, which become a single entity in the case of a member of one ancestral family, become multiple for one who is a member of several. When lamenting a dead person, mention is always made of the various scenes which he will have visited, and the forms he will have assumed. At a memorial potlatch, the deceased may return as a hybrid, or as

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948

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775 one of the several crests which it is believed he has become. The point does not appear important to the Bella Coola, corresponding to their indefinite ideas concerning whether the spirit and the life have become a single being, or several.

Knowledge of the life led in *Nusmät-a* by the deceased, now in the form of his crest,[49] is most indefinite. In a general way it is felt that the actions of this being are similar to those carried on during life, but in a more advanced degree. A skilled carpenter is a better carpenter in the land above, a chief who has given many potlatches below can give more in *Nusmät-a*. This [593] belief finds expression in mourning songs which frequently state how *Alquntäm* has called a good carpenter to work above, or how a chief has gone to exhibit his generosity in a new sphere. It is doubtful whether this sentiment plays any real part in Bella Coola thought. The spirit and the life of a dead person have gone too far away to affect the living; what little is known of their actions has been handed down from the distant past and is merely a matter of history. The only time that these 775 two merged elements come to this world is at a memorial pot- 769 latch, and formerly the uninitiated undoubtedly believed that 556 they were witnessing such a visit. Though the spectators were shown as a matter of course that the spirit and the life had become bird or animal, emphasis was laid on the fact that they had become the *particular* bird or animal crest of the donor's ancestral family. The effect of the memorial potlatch in former times, as at present, was, therefore, social rather than religious. Besides, the two parts portrayed have never been known 775 to affect a human being; they expect no offerings, grant no assistance, cause no injury, and are accordingly neglected.

In comparison with the above vague beliefs, Bella Coola information concerning ghosts is clear and exact. As already

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[773] [49] It is accepted that men were created as human beings, and only assumed bird or animal shapes in order to reach the earth, but there is no corresponding belief that the spirit and the life change back from crest to human form on arrival above. Of course the performance of human activities by zoomorphic creatures presents no difficulties to Bella Coola thought.

described, at death the shadow, the body, and a portion of the life, descend to the land below where existence is continued as a ghost. These wraiths are usually termed, *K'olkwᵘlmx*, "The Earthy Ones," though they prefer the name *Asiutänem*, "They Who Have Become Supernatural." They enter into the lives and actions of the Bella Coola in a way entirely different from that of the elements which go aloft at death. 775

The land of ghosts, immediately beneath the earth, is similar to it. There are trees and bushes, stones, grass, everything as on the surface of the world. There is a river, too, but it rises in the west and flows eastward, contrary to the course of the Bella Coola. The sun that shines below is green and unnatural, giving an ethereal light like that of the moon which, indeed, it is sometimes said to be. The seasons are the reverse of those on earth; when mortals are in midsummer, it is wintertime for ghosts. The fluff which human beings see falling from cottonwood trees reaches the land of ghosts as snow. All earthly springs rise from the river in the land below; they never freeze in winter because they come from a warm region, and the coldness of spring water in summer is the result of coming from a land where it is winter. With the exception of the peculiar light, the only essential difference between the land of ghosts and this world is that food is very scarce in the former; berries grow below, and it is supposed that there must be fish and animals there, but it is common knowledge that residents there are always hungry. 772 775 [823]

The life led by ghosts is similar to that of human beings. They occupy the same type of house as before death, dwell in the same kind of villages on the river bank, wear similar clothes, have similar likes and dislikes, require similar food, and even enjoy the same kind of dances. One old Bella Coola even stated that the ghosts are able to summon supernatural beings from *Nusmät-a* to their *kusiut* rites. It is generally believed that no work is done below, although several of the older people denied this. According to these individuals, a ghost can perform more rapidly and easily whatever tasks he had been 775

775 accustomed to do when alive; but the workmanship is shadowy and unsubstantial, sometimes even transparent. Ghosts do not act like human beings, but usually walk backwards, sometimes even on their heads, and spend much of their time playing a game resembling football with large, globular objects made of some light substance. They communicate with one another both by whistling and in a language which resembles the attempts at speech made by a tongueless person. Some
775 individuals believe that there is a supreme chief in the land of
776 ghosts, *Allät-iaiutl*, sent down like Pluto to preside over the shades. He figures in certain stories describing descents to the lower world; but many Bella Coola know nothing of his existence below, although it furnishes a plausible explanation for his coming by night to molest human beings. Like *Sxaiemsm*
[761] he causes blood to rush forth from the mouth and genitalia of anyone whom he seizes; death follows, and a new victim has been acquired for his kingdom. The more common belief is
775 that the villages of ghosts have chiefs like those of human beings. It is thought, indefinitely, that after a long period of time the ghosts die, and some of them may then return to
[845] this world as infants. A child born with dimples in its ears, which are regarded as indications of previous borings for rings, is welcomed as the reincarnation of some unknown ancestor.

At death, the ghost does not immediately appear in the land below, but remains for four days within the back-room of a house corresponding in style to an ordinary Bella Coola
[772] dwelling. It is believed that one of these large houses is beneath every village* and that the dead pass straight down through the earth into it. Meanwhile the goods, burnt at the grave during the funeral, as well as those deposited beside it, have fallen through the ground and notified the ghosts that a newcomer has arrived. The wraiths assemble from all directions and fight over the articles, none of which are obtained
[768] by the one who owned them during life. On the fourth

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*There may be one huge house, extending beneath the world like *Nusmata* above; it was impossible to obtain definite information on this point.

day after the funeral, the relatives of the dead person burn the remainder of his property, which passes through the earth to the ghost for whom it is intended. Ghost-singers have taken their places and begin to beat out music, and presently the recently deceased appears, stepping backwards from the back-room in time to the beating of sticks. He is at once surrounded by his fellows, each anxious to learn the latest news of relatives still alive. This dance is really to welcome the new arrival, and takes place irrespective of his rank. After it has been held, it is hopeless to attempt to rescue a dead person, although that has been done several times during the four days immediately succeeding death. 775 [768]

Only shamans are able to peer down into the land of the dead, though stories are told of inadvertent visits to it in relatively recent times. Human beings are prevented from visiting their dead relatives, but the latter, being supernatural, can come to the earth at will. They are always dreaded, and anyone who hears their whistling or their tongueless chatter cowers in his house, and hopes they will pass by. Shamans can understand their speech and to them the dead explain their mission. If the relations of a dead person have failed to burn all his personal possessions, he returns to earth to inform them, through a shaman, of the omission. The house is scoured for anything left and it is burnt at once near the grave, though no one knows how a ghost would punish failure to give him his property. Thoughtful people, remembering the scarcity of food in the land below, frequently give presents to their dead relatives by casting small morsels of food on the side of the central fire nearest the front door, beneath which is a passage to the lower regions. The food becomes magnified as it falls down this, so that even small fragments are sufficient to feed many hungry ghosts. Since the introduction of metal stoves, it has become customary to throw food into a fire kindled for the purpose in the cemetery; the most suitable time is at dusk, although people are always afraid that spectres may be prowling around at that hour. If sufficient presents are not given [756] [756] [768] [264] [775] [779] [756]

775 to a ghost, he informs a shaman of the fact and the latter
[756] notifies the relatives of the deceased. If no shaman is convenient, the shade does not hesitate to help himself. Invisible,
264 and armed with a barbed hook, he approaches a person who is
775 eating and pulls away a crumb which falls to the earth. Should the eater stoop to pick this up, the ghost, robbed of his booty,
753 beats the offender with his hook, causing toothache or sometimes a sharp pain in the head or stomach. Other ailments are caused by the ghosts hitting with invisible stones those who have offended them. Consequently, no one picks up a crumb which has fallen, since it is impossible to know whether it has
[827] been an accident or a seizure. Another indication of a ghost's hunger is loss of a tooth. The loser should throw it on a fire
[762] with an invitation to the dead to accept his offering.

775 The barrier between ghosts and human beings is considered to be little more than a wall of smoke, just too dense for ordinary eyes to penetrate. In early times intercommunication between the denizens of the two worlds was so easy that a doting mother was once allowed to send her dead child on earth. Unfortunately, the woman's mother one day insisted on holding her grandchild, unaware that he was a ghost. Shocked at his appearance, the old woman dropped the child, much to the anger of the dead people.[39] Ever since that time it has been impossible for human beings to see and talk with
[538] their deceased kinsmen. Like so many Bella Coola stories, it is doubtful whether this one is regarded as more than an item of ancient history; it is considered to be a fact, but it is not one that enters into the daily thoughts of the people.

[231] Ghosts frequently come to their old homes at night where dogs can see them. If one of these animals begins to bark and gazes fixedly at a spot where nothing is to be seen, it is because a wraith is standing there and the dog's owner hopes that it will remain invisible. It is true that some individuals have
[756] received shamanistic power from a ghost, but more often a visitation is disastrous and to be avoided. A dead person often

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[39] This story is recorded in detail later ([illegible]).

tries to speak to living relatives, but his whistling language is unintelligible and frightens the hearer. 775 Ghosts dislike urine, and the only means known to keep them away from a house is [784] to sprinkle this liquid outside the door, a common Bella Coola custom. There is no actual danger in hearing a ghost, and 761 little even in seeing one, provided the observer does not relate his experience, but should he try to do so, something happens 775 to his mouth as if an invisible hand had been clamped over it 753 to prevent his words issuing forth. He can neither eat nor drink and soon dies.[*] It is possible that other beings are responsible for this same affliction, but as no sufferer has ever been able to explain the cause of his ailment, no one knows. The most dangerous ghost is that of a person who, buried [764] without a nose-ring, is unable to disintegrate into his elements. The sight of such an apparition causes almost immediate death through contraction and closing of the mouth.

An unpleasant habit of ghosts is the throwing of stones at 776 the living. This is done partly from a love of mischief, and partly to remind their relatives of their needs. An old Kimsquit man described how, when encamped on King Island, he had almost been struck by a stone which seemed to fall from a tree. He realized that it must have been thrown by a ghost, [753] and his opinion was confirmed when he found he could not [755] speak. He instantly built a fire and cast on it both food and clothing as offerings to the dead, which had the effect of loosening his mouth. Pondering on the reason, he remembered that one of his relatives had died not far away, and that he had failed to give him any crumbs for a long time. In this case, as in many others, the stone was visible, though the thrower remained invisible.

Even near approach to ghosts is sometimes dangerous. The same man related how, when hunting, he heard what he thought was the note of a water ousel, and passed by heedlessly. In a few minutes he thought he heard the cackling of geese, but the sound, instead of continuing to come from a pond a few hun-

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[*] The disease attributed to the actions of ghosts may be lockjaw. [164]

775 dred yards away, rapidly drew near the hunter along the trail.
He raised his musket and stepped aside, but though the sound
went past him down the path, he could see nothing. Terrified,
he realized that he had been near two ghosts, and rushed back
[754] to the village. A shaman was called who informed him that
he had met his dead father's sister and another relative, both
of whom were hungry. The hunter, too weak from fright to
help himself, watched the shaman light a fire and throw on it
[755] a considerable amount of food and goods. Finally, he ripped
the hunter's shirt from his back and threw it into the flames.
Consequently, no harm resulted from this experience.

Ghosts, like all other supernatural beings, can, of course, control their powers so that their appearance does not injure a beholder. A few years before 1922 a certain *Ṣpenlās·i*, whose ancestral name was *Lo·qma·t*, was encamped at *Sackmenats* on the Labouchere Channel side of King Island. At dusk a woman came to his fire and proceeded to warm her cape. He recognized from her green face that she must be a ghost and boldly asked her what she wanted.

"I have been searching for mussels," she replied, "but without success."

In an instant she vanished and *Ṣpenlās·i* experienced
neither good nor evil from this apparition. The Bella Coola say
that this being may not have been a ghost as he had thought,
[776] but was perhaps one of the under-sea dwellers who have some-
what the same appearance.

Since ghosts, like other supernatural beings, are believed
to possess both wisdom and power, it might be thought that
they would be invoked frequently. Instead, death has altered
their character to such an extent that they are avoided and
752 kept at a distance. The only time that an appeal is made to
775 a ghost is when a young person dies without apparent reason
and the survivors wish to learn the cause. The body is buried
777 with a long cord consisting of alternate strands of dyed and
[772] undyed cedar-bark projecting from its mouth and stretching
to the surface. The relative desiring information summons
to his house several shamans whose powers have been obtained

from ghosts, and for four days feeds them lavishly. On the 756
fifth morning they proceed to the grave, accompanied by 775
kinsmen of the deceased, and pound on the ground with sticks, 787
asking the dead person whether or not he had been murdered, and if so, the name of the murderer. It is said that in former times the voice of the deceased could always be plainly heard giving the desired information. This ceremony has not been carried out for many years, and exact details are not known by any of the living Bella Coola. It seems clear that ventriloquism must have been employed, requiring active deception [198] on the part of the shamans.

It was difficult to ascertain to what extent shamans believed in their own powers to understand the speech of ghosts. There is no doubt that the Bella Coola are easily influenced by suggestion, and if an individual is told that he has received help from a ghost, it is not difficult for him to believe that such has been the case. Further, his fellows are convinced of his powers, a circumstance which does not fail to affect him. It may be stated definitely that in many cases shamans have some confidence in their own powers, although they do not hesitate to use deception to increase their prestige. This point will be considered in greater detail in the following chapter.

ACCOUNTS OF EXPERIENCES WITH GHOSTS

Much of the information concerning ghosts is contained in 539
stories which have been handed down for generations and 775
which are regarded as historical records. Some of these must be deferred to the chapters on folk-lore and shamanism, but the following are sufficient to explain the source of many Bella Coola beliefs on this subject.[illegible]

A Rescue from Ghosts

Long, long ago, there lived a little girl who used to cry incessantly. One evening when she was disturbing the whole household by weeping, her father said angrily to her:

[illegible] These stories have been included at this point as specific illustrations of the type of legend upon which generalized beliefs depend.

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"Keep quiet or the ghosts will come and carry you off."

Even this threat did not silence her; later on, all her companions went to bed, leaving her alone, crying, in the central part of the house. After a time her father noticed the child's sobs had grown fainter, though she seemed to be weeping in the same manner as before. He went out to investigate, found her place vacant, and, listening intently, realized that the sound came from below; the ghosts had come for her. He roused the household and called in all the men of the village to dig for the girl with sharpened spruce branches. Her crying was still audible and the diggers were directed by it; sometimes they seemed to be on the point of overtaking her, but always her ghost-captor eluded his pursuers by moving sideways through the ground instead of continuing his direct descent. At length the men gave up their task in despair, leaving the mourning father and mother to lament the former's rash remark which had brought the ghosts.

The parents of the girl consulted all the village shamans, one of whom formulated a scheme to rescue the victim. He told her relatives to remove alternate boards from the roof of the house, and to place on each remaining one a vessel filled with urine. He stationed a helper beside each vessel, ready to upset it when he gave the signal, and requested everyone else to leave the house. When these arrangements had been carried out, the shaman went alone to the cemetery, passed through the earth to the land of ghosts, and invited the wraiths to assemble in the house for a feast. They gladly accepted, and the hidden assistants watched them enter, one or two at a time, as if they had been human beings bidden to a ceremony. At last all had arrived except the principal chief, who was to sit in the central seat behind the fire. The feast could not proceed without him, so the ghosts sent a special messenger down below to summon him. It was this chief who had stolen the child, and the excitement of the watchers became intense as he entered, carrying concealed beneath his cloak the girl whose cries betrayed her presence to the hidden relatives. When all had taken their places, the shaman gave the previously arranged signal and his accomplices tipped the urine over the beings below. Wild confusion followed. The ghosts dashed to and fro, showing their anger and resentment by furious whistling and incoherent gurgling. At last they rushed from the house, abandoning the child. They could still be heard in the vicinity of the village, so the shaman directed the people to scatter urine all around the houses, which drove away the unwelcome visitors. The use of this deterrent was first learnt on this occasion.

The parents of the stolen child were overjoyed at her rescue, but it was soon apparent that their daughter had changed. She would not eat;

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in fact, she acted as if she could not see food placed before her. The next morning she rose early and was seen to eat the ashes of fish that had been burnt as torches; this proved conclusively that she was really dead. Thenceforth, instead of being given food in the usual way, her meals were thrown into the fire, from the ashes of which she received her nourishment. Ever since that time, the Bella Coola have recognized that food for the dead must be thrown on a fire.

An Attempt to Rescue a Dead Wife

Two or three hundred years after the first settlement of the earth, a brave Kimsquit man, *Nu·skobolaxamy*, set out with his three sons to hunt seals. His wife was in an advanced state of pregnancy at the time, but her delivery was not expected for several weeks and her husband had no hesitation in leaving her. The hunters were absent for three full days and nights, and returned home soon after dusk on the fourth day, having had great success. When they landed at the beach they were surprised to see no lights in any of the houses except their own. Leaving two of his sons in the canoe, *Nu·skobolaxamy* and the other lad cautiously approached the dwelling. As they drew near, they realized that the light which shone forth was green and unearthly, and that the smoke, too, was greenish instead of white. Looking through the door, *Nu·skobolaxamy* saw his wife standing with bowed head dangling an infant in a cradle suspended from a cord. This is a common method of soothing a child, but *Nu·skobolaxamy* was horrified to see that the cradle had been fastened to the cord upside down so that the infant was hanging head downwards, with no visible fastening to prevent it from falling to the floor.

"Look out! The child will fall and be killed," *Nu·skobolaxamy* called to his wife, but she did not seem to hear him.

The husband entered the house and touched her, but she crumbled to bones as he did so. The watching son cried out in fear and horror. *Nu·skobolaxamy* hastily left the house and the two returned to the canoe, after ascertaining that no living people were in the village.

The four hunters slept that night in their canoe, and next morning *Nu·skobolaxamy* prowled around until he found the villagers hiding in the forest not far away. They explained that, two days after his departure, his wife had given birth to a child, but the after-birth had not come away and she had died. It was the first time that this had ever happened and the people had fled from the village in fear.

Nu·skobolaxamy knew that the ghosts would dance to welcome his wife on the fourth day after her death, and he determined to attempt to rescue her at that time. On the evening of the second day, the fourth after her death, he and his three sons lurked in the vicinity of their house. Pre-

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sently they heard the sound of drums, which they knew must herald the approach of ghosts, so they hid themselves on the roof of their own house in such positions that they could peer down within. In some unknown way the four had been granted the power to see ghosts, for they observed the entry of what looked like ordinary human beings, though in reality they were wraiths. These took their places like spectators at a ceremony, while several with beating sticks seated themselves behind the fire as singers. As they struck their batons on the floor, one of the ghosts began to dance in time to the music, and *Nu-skabdixamy*'s wife came to life and watched. Two ghosts who were directing the ceremony called out, "*i* · · · · *a* · · · · *i* · · · · *a* · · ·," which are words in the language of the dead and serve to invite some supernatural being from above to one of their ceremonies. In answer to the call, there came a thump on the roof, marking the descent of the visitor. This gave the dead woman power to move and she began to dance around the fire. She had completed one circuit and was on her second when one of the ghosts called out:

"Take care! I feel as if living people were watching us."

Some of the ghosts at once left the house and searched the bushes near it.

"No," they said on their return, "No one is near."

Nu-skabdixamy's wife continued her dance, and as she was circling the fire for the third time, her husband whispered to his sons:

"As she goes round the fourth time we must jump down, catch her, and fly to our canoe."

When the woman was midway in her fourth circuit, the four leapt into the house and *Nu-skabdixamy* clutched his wife in his arms, but she crumbled to bones at his touch and the ghosts rushed away, whistling angrily, leaving the four alone, *Nu-skabdixamy* holding the skeleton of his wife. Then they went and joined the other inhabitants of the village in their hiding-place. Everyone was anxious to hear the outcome of the attempt, though some did not believe the story. *Nu-skabdixamy* made no further effort to rescue his wife, knowing that it would be hopeless after the fourth day when the ghosts had welcomed her as one of themselves.

An Inadvertent Visit to the Land of Ghosts

A few years after the first settlement of the earth, four Kimsquit men went into the mountains to hunt goats. The first night of their absence, before they had killed any game, they lay down to sleep in a cave. Nothing disturbed their rest, but when they awoke in the morning they were amazed to find themselves in a strange country. They were near a wooded valley through which flowed a river resembling the Dean, but instead of

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the sun, there was shining in the sky a sphere that gave forth a green, sickly light. Unknown to them, the cave in which they had been sleeping had turned over on itself and projected them into the land of ghosts. The four brothers descended into the valley and walked up the bank of the river until they saw a large village on the other bank. It seemed to contain countless inhabitants who were amusing themselves by rolling to and fro with their feet a large, round object like a football. This led the four travellers to think they must be in the land of ghosts, though they were puzzled to know how they had reached it. They called across to the players, but though the river was narrow and though they shouted loudly and repeatedly, they received no answer. The reason for this, as they later discovered, was that the language of ghosts differs from that of human beings, and neither can hear the speech of the other. After a considerable interval, the third brother, who was sleepy, happened to yawn noisily; all the ghosts heard this sound and stopped their play to see whence it had come. They saw the four at once and called to them that they would send a canoe to bring them across the river. Two of the ghosts manned a large, skin canoe and poled it across, but as the bow touched the bank where they were standing, the oldest brother pointed out to his fellows that it was transparent. They all looked down into it and could see sticks and stones on the bottom of the river through the floor of the craft. They were somewhat nervous about trusting themselves in such a canoe, but the oldest shut his eyes and jumped aboard without mishap, followed by the other three. They soon landed on the beach in front of the village, but before any one of the four could set foot on the ground the ghosts who had come crowding around picked them up in their arms. Each was tossed by his holder to another further inland, and in this way they were gently thrown from hand to hand until deposited within the house of the chief, without using their feet and without a single ghost having had to move from the spot where he had been standing.

The four human beings found themselves in a large house crowded with what seemed to be people, but what they knew must be ghosts. At that distant period, men were wiser than they are today, and the brothers realized that the chief must be *[illegible]* himself. Ghost-heralds brought food to the four strangers, but they concealed it beneath their capes instead of eating it, remembering what they had heard at Kimsquit that a person who eats the food of the dead can never leave their home. The chief was kind to them and somewhat facetiously told them that they would come to harm if they stayed in a country where the people played so much as they did in his. He added that they could return to earth by the same route by which they had come, and advised them to

539 775 hurry back. After as short a visit as they thought polite, they asked to be ferried back across the river and retraced their steps to the cave where they had slept the previous night. It was dusk by this time and they lay down to sleep. During the night the cave rotated on itself once more, and in the morning they were delighted to find themselves in the mountains above the Dean River.

This was the first time that anyone had penetrated to the land of ghosts, and the friends of the four brothers were intensely interested in the account of their experiences. It was October at the time, but they explained that it was late winter in the land below. Noone knows why or how the four brothers had received the power to pass into the land of ghosts, although it is assumed that *Alquntam* must have granted them the boon.

A Kitlobe Story of a Descent to the Land of Ghosts

177 539 775 The following story was related by an elderly man who had heard it about ten years previously from three Christian Kitlobe who had been his fellow-passengers on a steamship between Vancouver and Bella Coola. It is not a Bella Coola story, although it has been circulated among members of the tribe as an interesting tale. The facts recorded in it do not agree entirely with their beliefs, but that is a matter of no [829] consequence to the Bella Coola who, having their own knowledge, consider it quite natural that the other tribes should have other concepts.

539 775 About one year before the story was told, a Kitlobe woman had died, leaving her husband and one grown-up daughter to mourn her. The husband refused to be comforted, and used to fall into a paroxysm of weeping whenever he saw any of his wife's clothing or goods. About a week after her funeral he took her clothing to the cemetery intending to burn it, but instead sat down on the ground to weep. Presently he noticed a passage beside him, down which he crawled until he came to a flat, rich land more prosperous than this world, where he wandered along aimlessly till he heard the sound of singing and hid himself behind a clump of bushes. There seemed to be five or six groups of people in different sections of the country, and the song was taken up in succession by each group. When he had remained in his hiding-place for some time, two people in new, white clothes passed so close to him that he could hear the rustling of their garments. He recognized one of the

passers-by as his wife, and the other as a fellow-villager who had died some time previously. Somewhat perturbed at finding his wife apparently on friendly terms with a male ghost, the husband decided to return home and ponder before taking any rash steps. 539 775

He crawled back along the passage to the cemetery and at once burnt his wife's clothing. When he reached home his daughter, who had been worried at his long absence, saw that her father had been weeping and tried to console him. He told her rather brusquely not to interrupt; and, while eating, recounted what he had seen that day, stating his determination to return in the morning and bring back his dead wife. His daughter begged him not to do so, reminding him that her mother had died of her own volition and that it would be dangerous to bring her back to earth; but the grieving father paid no attention to her appeal.

Next morning the man went again to the cemetery, where he found the passage still open. He went down, hid in the same thicket, and heard the same singing taken up by group after group. As on the previous day, after a considerable period of waiting, his wife passed by in company with the same male ghost. The husband rushed forth, seized her and shoved away her companion, who ran off discomfited. The woman offered no resistance, and her husband told her that he was going to take her back home again. The two returned to the passage, the man guided his dead wife through it to the cemetery, and thence they set out for their house.

Meanwhile the daughter, dreading what might transpire, had remained within. As her father opened the door, she cowered at the side of the house and saw that his hand was held out as if he were leading someone, though only one figure was visible to her. Her fear increased when she heard lighter footsteps accompanying his, and the rustling of clothing. She heard her father tell his wife, whom he addressed by name, that he would leave her in the main part of the house for a moment while he arranged the bedroom; he set about this, but though the daughter eagerly looked for her mother, she was invisible. When the father returned, he led his wife to the bedroom, but to the daughter it seemed as if he had put out his arm to guide nothing more tangible than air. The frightened girl could hear her father asking questions and giving answers as if in conversation, but her mother's voice was inaudible. The daughter heard her father ask his wife how she liked the land below and, judging from his later comments, concluded that she had said it was preferable to the land of the living except for the scarcity of food. The mother must have added that for this reason ghosts visit the houses of

539 775 human beings, knock crumbs to the ground with minute hooks, and punish by beating with the same barbs anyone who offends them by picking up such morsels. The girl heard her father say that in future he would be more careful to throw fragments of food on the fire, since he now knew that these were not only desired by the dead, but were necessary to them. Her mother must have asked whether they had eaten all the dried salmon, for her father answered:

"No. We have been so grief-stricken at your death that we have eaten hardly anything."

After a pause the girl heard her father say "All right," and judged that her mother had said she would go to get some. In a moment the door opened, though no one appeared, and the thoroughly awed girl heard the sound of light footsteps. She saw the ropes with which the box was bound unloosened without visible agent, and the salmon piled in a neat heap on the floor, then the bundle seemed to rise of its own accord and pass out through the front-door without human aid. After an interval the father appeared and asked his daughter where her mother had gone. The frightened girl told what she had seen, and both were amazed and puzzled. At last it dawned on the grieving husband that his wife must have stolen the food for the benefit of her friends below and had returned to her new home.

The husband, now twice bereaved, was filled with woe at this second loss, which was unexpected as his wife had said nothing of her intention of leaving. After deliberating for several days, he descended again to the land of ghosts, heedless of his daughter's appeals. He concealed himself in the same spot as before, and soon heard singing; but this time the words and tune were different and he listened intently. To his horror, the theme was of the ingenuity of a dead woman who had revisited her home, deceived her husband, and brought away a supply of dried salmon for the use of the ghosts. He recognized that the song must refer to his own wife and, grieved and humiliated, he returned home forthwith. He warned his daughter to say nothing of what had occurred and she obeyed his instructions, not wishing their shame to become known. A few days later, however, a number of friends gathered to console the husband; he became intoxicated, told the guests his adventures, and taught them the songs used by the dead.

A Carrier Story of an Ascent to the Land of the Dead

177 539 The following, like the last, is not a Bella Coola story. It is one known to a number of Kimsquit and deserves inclusion

Carrier NE7

among Bella Coola tales if only for the reason that stories of foreign origin, when told sufficiently often, tend to be considered indigenous and the facts recorded in them accepted and incorporated into Bella Coola belief. This factor is undoubtedly responsible for many conflicting elements in their theology. The following story has every indication of Christian influence but is not less interesting on that account, as illustrating the process of assimilating new ideas into mythology. B 177 539 B C 539 775

About 1870, *Māmaiyu*,[a] a *Xuais* Indian from Ootsa Lake, and his brother were trapping beaver in one of the lakes of the interior. They were both good hunters and every morning killed at least one of the animals. *Māmaiyu* was a strong, apparently healthy man, but one morning he fell dead. His grief-stricken brother was puzzled to know what to do with the body. It was winter, and the heavy snow and frozen earth made interment impossible, while lack of fire-wood made cremation out of the question, so he merely tied up the corpse to await better weather. Meanwhile *Māmaiyu* had gone aloft, where he saw a huge house containing many rooms. He went to the first of these, where a man was sitting with a huge book before him.

"What do you want?" asked the man.

Māmaiyu did not answer and his questioner continued:

"Your name is not here. Why did you come?"

This happened in one room after another, for *Māmaiyu* tried them all. Finally, at the end of the house, he came to the seat of the chief, who said to him:

"You have made a mistake. The time for you has not yet come. If you want to stay, you can do so by drinking this."

He showed *Māmaiyu* a glass containing a green liquid.

"If not," continued the chief, "you must drink this," and he showed him another glass filled with a white liquid.

Throughout this speech *Māmaiyu* had heard a strange rumbling and wondered what could be its cause. Happening to glance out through a window at the rear of the house, he saw a huge, metal ball, constantly revolving and giving forth the rumbling sound as it did so. From within

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[a] This story was related by Jim Pollard, an elderly Kimsquit, who stated that as a young man he had known *Māmaiyu*, who was about fifty years older than he. This tale is interesting as showing the manner in which a miraculous account can become accepted as fact within a short space of time. *Māmaiyu* must have been a man of imaginative temperament who was convinced that he had experienced incidents told to him by some white man.

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948

NE6 Bellacoola NE6

Carrier NE7

B came wailing voices and at intervals an agonized face appeared at one
C of the many small openings in the surface of the sphere. The supreme
being, for the chief was none other, told him that those within the ball
539 were evil persons, those who had committed theft or murder during life.
775 *Māmaiyu*, though innocent of these crimes, decided that he would be safer on earth and asked for the glass with the white liquid, which he hastily drained. The supreme deity inquired what present he would like as token of the visit, and he requested a beaver-axe, that is, one with a crooked handle such as beaver use.*

At the moment when *Māmaiyu* drank the white liquid, his brother saw his body move very slightly. He hastily warmed some mountain goat grease and with this rubbed his face and mouth. At first he was unable to speak, owing to his muscles having become rigid from the cold, but they loosened gradually so that he was able to recount his experiences. *Māmaiyu*'s axe, being of supernatural origin, was invisible to all human beings, but this did not affect its potency, and from that time onwards the owner could catch beaver as easily as other men could catch salmon.

B The information contained in this story does not cor-
177 respond at all with Bella Coola beliefs concerning the fate
539 of the dead. They tell it, and assume that such experi-
775 ences are normal for dead *Xupais*, though unknown to their
own people.

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[825] *The Bella Coola know that beaver must have axes of this kind to accomplish their work, although white people, deceived by the invisibility of these, believe the animals use their teeth. *Māmaiyu* received an axe of this type.

CHAPTER IX

RELATIONS WITH THE SUPERNATURAL

Introductory—Sterile Apparitions—Supernatural Aid Granted to the Unfortunate—Supernatural Good Luck—Shamanism—Direct Revelations from the Supreme God—Power Localized in Certain Spots—Dreams

INTRODUCTORY

THE aspects of Bella Coola life thus far described have been 787*
principally of a nature which might be experienced by
any member of the community. On the other hand, contact
with supernatural beings is a privilege granted to individuals
without respect to rank; even arduous appeal cannot assure it.
The few to whom signal favours are granted acquire a position [554]
of importance totally different from that of chiefs. The Bella 787*
Coola are firmly convinced that supernatural beings abound in
the mountains and forests of British Columbia, and that every 776
activity of human life is governed by them. Not only do these
creatures include monsters of the imagination, but birds, ani- [828]
mals, and fish; even the activities of the human mind are
considered to be beyond the scope of normal life. Ancient
stories describing the actions of strange creatures and con-
versations between man and animals are accepted as truthful [538]
accounts, so that it seems obvious to the Bella Coola that
his ancestors were more powerful than he is today. Never
considering the possibility of errors in his stories, he accepts
the alternative hypothesis that mankind has sadly degenerated
from the golden age. Nevertheless, he assumes that the beings
have not altered, and consequently hopes to encounter them
on every occasion. Moreover, this firm background of belief 781
makes it easy for him to recognize supernatural influence in
events which a white man would consider to be natural. It is
impossible to over-emphasize this concept.

* 787 [535] [781] Dances portraying supernatural beings, carried out with full vigour until a few years ago, further fostered belief in them among participants and uninitiated alike. Consequently, many of the young and middle-aged men claim to have seen visions similar to those of their elders. The incident already described (I, p. 30) of the stump which was thought to be a grizzly bear is a case in point. On another occasion a young man mentioned casually that a few evenings before he had seen a headless man walking along the road and that, wishing to view the monstrosity more clearly, he had tried unsuccessfully to strike a match. The reason was obvious to him; the power of the supernatural visitor prevented the match from lighting. The man, who was undoubtedly convinced of the apparition, may have seen something, perhaps a whorl of fog, somewhat resembling a headless body. [154] A white man would have considered such a sight impossible and absurd, whereas the Bella Coola felt little surprise at the appearance of such a creature and promptly accepted it for what it seemed to be.

[828] Mental activities as well as optical illusions are likewise ascribed to supernatural agency. These include profound agitations of the mind, and even what a white man would consider a passing thought. For instance, one morning when about to start work, a certain man stated that he would have good fortune during the day, that a dream had foretold it. At the time he was moving to a new house and needed help to shift a heavy stove. During the course of the day a number of white men happened to pass by and stopped to speak to him; the stove was mentioned, they offered to move it for him, and did so easily and quickly.

"There you are," said the man, "I told you I was going to have good fortune today."

On another occasion the same man claimed to have felt that misfortune had happened to him and soon learnt that one of his sons had been arrested on a charge of drunkenness and disorderly conduct. The man affirmed that he had this premonition before being aware of its cause.

The explanation of these manifestations of the supernormal, 787*
for such they are considered to be, lies in the conviction that 811
every activity of the mind is due to supernatural causation,
the functioning of the spirit. In the round of daily life there [828]
are always good and bad incidents; the person who wakes
expecting to meet one or other before nightfall recognizes the [774]
fulfilment of his premonition in some small occurrence, and
narrates it to his fellows as proof of what he had told them in
the morning. In case of some major event, such as death or
disaster, the Bella Coola assume that some previous indication
must have been given. Looking back after the event, a man
easily persuades himself that he "felt" a warning, and is more
than ever convinced that his spirit, the cause of his thoughts, [774]
has supernatural ability.

Conviction in the near presence of the supernatural has had 177
somewhat surprising results with regard to Christian Bella 787*
Coola. A man converted in middle life carries all the fervour
and realism of the old religion with him to the new, and feels 781
thoroughly familiar with the atmosphere of the Old Testament. 797
Visitations, such as therein described, are similar to those
experienced by his fathers and himself, and he scorns the white
man who questions their literal accuracy. He continues to
hear the voices of supernatural beings, and to interpret mental [828]
pictures as visions, but he ascribes them to the beings of the
white man's religion. The following is a rather striking illustration of this point:

> A number of years ago a devout Christian, who may be 159
> designated X, was a patient in the hospital at Bella Bella. In 177
> the same ward was a young Bella Bella lad whose sickness
> refused to yield to treatment. X, becoming interested in his 787*
> neighbour, began to ponder about his condition, until presently 781
> he felt convinced that the sufferer would be better by seven
> o'clock the following morning, and told him so. A marked 797
> improvement was noticeable by the time predicted, but the
> white doctor foolishly (according to X) gave his patient some

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177 more medicine and he became worse. The same thing happened
* 787 on the following day. The sick boy grew steadily worse until,
nine days later, he felt that he was dying and asked X to help
781 him.

797 "No," replied X, "I am no doctor. But you will be all right. I see Holy Ghost, Holy Spirit, Baptism, and Believe-it [Faith?] by your bed. Repent and you will be saved."

X added that the Bella Bella saw and repented before his death so that he has undoubtedly been saved.

X is a friend of the writer's and a man with whom he worked for a number of months and whom he feels that he knows intimately. He is almost invariably truthful, and any falsehoods he uses are clumsy and easily detected. In this case there is no doubt but that he believes he saw these four figures as four white human beings. He was in an emotional condition at the time, hoping and expecting to see something of the kind. In earlier days he would have seen supernatural beings of the Bella Coola pantheon with equal conviction. On quite another occasion, when he was preaching, the same man felt what seemed to be a heavy drop of water fall on his head. He was in the open at the time and, looking up, was surprised to find nothing from which it could have fallen. He realized that it must have been power which had come to him, and forthwith he began to preach as he had never preached before. He expected supernatural assistance, and the belief that it had been granted to him undoubtedly strengthened his efforts.

* 787 All Bella Coola are not equally liable to visions and mental
781 visitations. Some, such as X, are constantly experiencing
them, whereas others of more stolid disposition do not feel the
159 presence of the supernatural to the same extent. None the less,
beings of the other world are constantly around them and,
before the introduction of Christianity, it is unlikely that any
individual passed through life without coming in contact with
some manifestation of the supernatural. Consequently, stories
* 789 descriptive of this are intelligible to the Bella Coola, bizarre

787 though they may be to the white man. It is hoped that the preceding illustrations, drawn from recent times, will explain the mental attitude of the Bella Coola better than incidents from folk-lore of the distant past.

Disregarding thoughts which, since they are caused by the spiritual elements of the human body, are ever present, relations with the supernatural may be divided into the following categories: [828] [774]

(1) *Appearance of supernatural beings from which neither good nor bad results follow.* Strictly speaking, every fleeting sight of a supernatural being belongs to this category, but it will be convenient to describe only experiences of a peculiar kind, such as the Bella Coola call *qos ahklawadjutlaix*. Usually manifestations of the supernatural have certain effects; consequently, there are relatively few incidents of this kind recorded.

(2) *Supernatural aid vouchsafed to a man or a woman in distress.* There are many tales illustrating this, which are told and retold to the children. In most cases the assistance is given to one who has undeservedly, according to Bella Coola concepts, fallen into misfortune.

(3) *Supernatural good luck.* This may be obtained by anyone, and consists of the acquisition of a supernatural object to attract, not only fish and animals, as if it were a potent bait, but money and goods as well. [777] [224] [226]

(4) *Acquisition of shamanistic power, with or without the ability to cure the sick.* This may be received from one of two sources: [756]

(a) *Thinápilás a or some other supernatural being.*

(b) *Ghosts, which are likewise supernatural.* [775]

(5) *Obtaining prophetic powers direct from the supreme god.* There are few instances of this, and none that is ascribed to a remote period. It is possible that all examples of this kind can be attributed to indirect Christian influence. [777]

(6) *Obtaining power from a supernatural being localized in a particular spot.* This usually takes the form of succour when [756]

787 [756] sick, and gives the person securing it ability to treat the same disease in others.

(7) Dreams, especially those in which supernatural apparitions visit the sleeper.

STERILE APPARITIONS §

539 787 The most common sterile apparitions are those of a stone giving birth to a smaller stone, a tree falling almost to earth, then righting itself, or the sight of some enormous monster. Such an experience may come to anyone, and no one can tell what it may portend. The following examples will illustrate this kind of phenomenon. In accordance with Bella Coola usage, these are recorded as if actual facts.

Between 1890 and 1900 a number of men were paddling home to Bella Coola one fine October day when, as they were passing beneath some precipitous rocks to the west of Kwatna Inlet, they saw a giant, as big as a medium-sized tree, come leaping down into the sea. They could not see his face, which was turned in the opposite direction, but as he sprang they noticed that his hands were shaking like a dancer's. He struck the water with a tremendous splash, hurling the spray a distance of a hundred yards, and nearly swamping the canoe. [776] They realised that the being must be a *snaig*, since it is well known that these creatures migrate to the mountain lakes for the summer and return to the ocean in the autumn.

Since there is a tendency for supernatural apparitions to appear in close succession, the paddlers were little surprised next day, as they passed near some flat rocks where seals were wont to sun themselves, to see a number of these animals come hurtling down from among the trees on the slope of a near-by mountain. The last to appear was as big as a grizzly bear. Undoubtedly the creatures were supernatural beasts that had assumed the form of seals. It had been a fine, clear day, but as soon as they had taken to the water such a severe storm arose that the canoe was almost engulfed.

§ [i.e. appearances of supernatural beings from which neither good nor bad results follow. - See cat. 116, p. 517 - ANALYST]

On the following day another adventure befell the same party when they were almost home. Passing the site of the present cannery, on the south side of North Bentinck Arm, about half a mile from its head, they went among some old stumps which at high tide resembled basking seals. When in the midst of these, they all seemed to come to life, crashing into the water in all directions, raising billows which drenched the paddlers with foam and nearly wrecked the canoe. The travellers considered themselves fortunate in reaching Bella Coola alive. 787 539

Apparitions have appeared several times near Mesatche Nose, the point between South Bentinck Arm and Labouchere Channel, a place noted for storms. On one occasion the father of a Bella Coola, in 1922, sixty years of age, was near there when he suddenly saw lights on two mountains diagonally opposite each other on either side of the fiord, at a distance of about six miles. The lights grew bigger and bigger, approached each other and receded, until finally they merged; it became bright as day, although it was midnight at the time, and there was only a new moon. The lights separated after a little, until each gradually withdrew to its mountain and disappeared.

Near the same spot some travellers once saw an enormous mountain goat walking on the surface of the water. Almost immediately a storm arose which swamped the canoe, and drowned all but one of its occupants. As soon as the craft was submerged, the gale subsided, as is always the case after people have been drowned. [821]

During 1924, while a young Bella Coola was proceeding down South Bentinck Arm in his motor-boat, a storm arose and the waves poured into his boat until it almost foundered. In the midst of the gale he saw two pillars of water shoot up from the surface of the fiord to a great height, then gradually fade away as if they had been smoke. The storm ultimately subsided. No one could tell which supernatural being had

777 thus manifested itself. A white man's explanation would be that the "apparition" consisted of two water-spouts.

539 On another occasion several Bella Coola were encamped on the shore of one of the bays of King Island opening from Labouchere Channel. As they lay dozing by the fire they became aware that a woman dressed in black was sitting near them, but closer to the flames than a mortal could have sat. She explained that she had been gathering mussels and was warming herself; then, rising, she walked into the sea and disappeared. She was one of the ocean dwellers of whom little is now known though formerly they were more often visible. Another time one of the same folk was plainly seen sitting on a rock, but as her observers blinked their eyes she vanished.

[776] Dwellers in the underwater world are to be found beneath the lakes of the interior as well as under the ocean. Not many years ago, when some men were carrying goat meat down from their hunting ground, they stopped beside the small lake which lies at the head of the creek *Asaqal·a'*, which enters the Bella Coola River about eight miles from the sea.

"I wonder what lives in that lake," one man said idly to a companion.

"Nothing," the other replied, but the first responded:

"You are wrong. Something evil lives there."

He had barely finished speaking when there rose from the lake a man with long hair, who stood, swaying back and forth, with the water around his thighs.

"There you are," said the first speaker to his doubting comrade, "I knew something lived yonder."

After a few minutes the man sank back under the water. Forthwith a strong wind began to blow, and snow not only fell from the heavens but rose from the lake. The hunters, who were not clothed for wintry weather, had great difficulty in getting back to the valley.

Occasionally the works of underwater people have been seen. The father of a man born about 1880 was paddling to Kwatna Inlet one night when he, as well as the other occupants of the canoe, heard a roaring noise and saw a fish-weir, similar to those used by the Bella Coola, travelling across Burke Channel, which is about a mile and a half wide at this point. They were close to the beach and a brave man cut a passage through the obstacle. A similar trap was once seen travelling across South Bentinck Arm.

An unusual apparition may be regarded as an omen of death. For example, not many years ago a young half-breed saw a motor-boat moored to the bank of North Bentinck Arm with an eagle seated in the stern. He ran his own motor-boat towards it, but as he approached the eagle became a man. Then as he drew still nearer, never taking his eyes off the other boat, it, with its occupant, sank beneath the water, without leaving so much as a ripple. On relating the incident to his father, the latter recognized it as an omen of death. Six months later the half-breed's sister died, thus confirming his father's prognostication.

SUPERNATURAL AID GRANTED TO THE UNFORTUNATE

Experiences such as have been cited in the last section are regarded as of possible, and not infrequent occurrence at the present time. On the other hand, supernatural aid granted to those in misfortune, though it is the theme of many stories, is not considered as likely to happen now. The Bella Coola believe the narratives to be chronicles of actual events, and base their conceptions of many supernatural beings on their characteristics as therein described. There is no ceremonial significance attached to any of these stories; they may be, and are told by anyone, frequently for entertainment. Unquestionably, there is a feeling that the moral brought out in such tales is of value in educating the young people, though this point is never emphasized.

Supernatural aid granted to an unfortunate person is termed *[illegible]*. Power so obtained cannot be transmitted by the recipient, although memory of the experience is

* 787 occasionally presented as the theme of a sacred dance. The term is also somewhat loosely applied to any instance of supernatural help. The reason for the receipt of power is often attributed to the strong supernatural elements of the favoured one, or to his having made himself agreeable to supernatural beings by the observance of ceremonial chastity or other propitiatory means. A few individuals assert that there is a tendency for supernatural aid to follow certain ancestral families, but such a belief is not general.

* 787 The following story is typical of the kind of assistance granted although no clear picture can be presented except through the native medium—a number of different tales, such as are given in the following chapter.

THE GOOD FORTUNE OF [illegible]

Not long after the earth was first populated there were living at [illegible], one [illegible], one Bella Bella man, [illegible] and [illegible], with their wives, relatives, and slaves. [illegible]'s son, [illegible], fell a victim to the virulent disease, [illegible], which causes the face of the sufferer to swell and the flesh to rot. When the case appeared hopeless, the father called his herald to tell the people to abandon [illegible], and to leave the dying youth alone. Accordingly they removed the planks from the houses, packed them on canoes with all the food and clothing from the village and went away, leaving the unfortunate [illegible] alone in the country. Only an old slave woman took pity on him; before she left she hid some glowing embers with [illegible] cedar-bark in a large clam-shell and told him where to find them.

[illegible] wept bitterly when his relatives deserted, but presently he dried his tears and set about making the best of his position. He uncovered the clam-shell and blew the embers into a fire. Then he made a hammer with which he built a rude shelter. A diet of clams at first satisfied him, but before long he made a hook in hopes of catching some trout. He went up the river to a suitable spot, dropped in his baited hook and almost immediately felt a bite. He hauled up his line eagerly, but it was only a worthless bull-head. Angrily he pulled out the hook and threw the fish back into the water. Almost immediately there was a bite, again he drew up his line only to find as before that it was a bull-head, which he hurled back into the river. This happened three times until, discouraged at landing only four useless fish, he dropped his hook in his cape and cried himself to sleep. The next day 'Yubudji once more tried his luck fishing, but again only landed four bull-heads, and again cried himself to sleep. It was the same on the third day and the fourth, and in the evening the hungry and disconsolate youth wept for a long time, his head wrapped in his cape.

Presently he felt someone kick his feet and heard a voice saying, "Stop crying! Get up!"

When the startled 'Yubudji opened his eyes there was no one in sight. Concluding that he must have been mistaken, he again covered his eyes and went to sleep. But he was aroused in the same way, once more without being able to see his visitor. This time before he lay down he made a tiny slit in his cape so that while he pretended to be asleep he was really watching through the eye-hole. Soon he saw approaching a beautiful woman whose hair was done in long braids as was the fashion of Fort Rupert women. Eagerly 'Yubudji threw back his cape, but at his first movement she vanished. There was nothing to do but hope that she would return, so he again lay down with the opening opposite his eye. Once more the woman drew near, but this time the youth did not move, even when she kicked him and repeated her command not to cry.

"I am [illegible]," he answered, "[illegible]."

The strange woman sat down without demur.

"Why did you throw away my children?" she asked. "They showed kindly feeling towards you in allowing themselves to be caught, and yet you rejected them angrily. None the less I have seen your misery and have come to help you. Now I shall save you."

When she had done this the woman continued, "I am going to give you supernatural power; when you want anything, just think of me and it will appear. I give you the chief's name, [illegible]; when you give a potlatch you must carve me on the posts of your house. My name is Beaver."

Then the woman vanished. She was a beaver in human form, which all animals are able to assume at will, though few mortals have the ability to see them except as animals.

'Yubudji decided to test his newly received power by wishing for a house. He thought of Beaver, and forthwith there stood a fine house before him. By merely thinking of his benefactress he was soon able to fill it with goods, blankets, mats, boxes, [illegible], cooking utensils, and food of all kinds, and on the beach he soon had a flotilla of canoes. The [illegible] of his [illegible] proved the prosperity of his [illegible].

Meanwhile [illegible] and those with him were in dire straits for food. One day the old slave woman who had befriended 'Yubudji happened to be foraging not far from [illegible] when she saw smoke rising from the place,

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She mistook it to be a hunt fire, but, when she idly went near to investigate, her amazement was past all bounds at seeing a fine house filled with valuables. Her utter surprise lessened when she discovered that ʼYatsadji was lord of it all. He welcomed her gladly, gave her a hearty meal, and sent back with her some seal meat for her child, only adding that it was to be eaten quietly as he did not wish his father to know of his good fortune.

"But," he added, "I don't mind if you send me any of the people except my father, especially any who were good to me long ago."

The slave woman thankfully carried the meat home to her child. But he, long deprived of proper food, ate so ravenously that night that a lump stuck in his throat and his coughing awoke Ṣxma'sals. The chief punched the youngster's neck until he vomited what was obviously a piece of seal. The slave-woman, remembering ʼYatsadji's order, tried to evade her master's questions as to where her son had obtained it, but at last she blurted out the truth, how the abandoned youth had become prosperous.

The slave woman and her friends moved to Ṣnixnai, where ʼYatsadji used his power of thought to obtain for them houses filled with everything they could desire. But Ṣxma'sals and those left with him were starving, so that they too soon came to seek his aid, gladly marrying their daughters to him to secure his protection. He rapidly rose to a position of importance, became husband of both real and fictitious wives, and was even able to guide his older brothers with names. Some of the women married to him became almost his slaves, as their families were unable to redeem them.

SUPERNATURAL GOOD LUCK

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A third manner in which the Bella Coola can come into contact with persons of another place is through supernatural good luck. This consists in obtaining something from a supernatural being, usually a portion of its skin or body, which acts as a lure to fish, animals, and even to such inanimate articles as blankets or skins. Even a tiny morsel placed on a weir will attract numerous salmon, or if set on a trap will prove an infallible lure to animals. When put in the owner's box, valuables will be attracted to it as steel to a magnet. Thus the fortunate possessor will be able to give many potlatches and to reach a high position in the community. Since this good fortune is

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wrapped up in a specific object it follows that the luck is transmissible; in fact, one of the chief advantages to the man who owns some valuable object is the wealth which he derives from selling a small portion of it. 777 789 " [432]

The Bella Coola term for supernatural good luck is *siyu*, meaning, "What is Good." This can come from any being though it is most frequently obtained either from a *mälispas* or a *nuiatl*. The former resembles a toad of enormous size, with a blazing fire-like glow in its throat; the latter is a double-headed salmon or snake that can travel on land. The person who succeeds in killing one of these creatures can use the carcass as a lure to wealth, if he knows the proper means. The portion must be wrapped in an article that has been in close contact with the slayer, such as a piece of his soiled clothing. This must be kept carefully hidden for one year in a cranny to which no rain can penetrate, and after that it can be used as bait. There is equal potency in a stick or other object which has come in contact with the beast. Great danger is attached to the sight of a *mälispas* or a *nuiatl*, since death usually follows any incorrect attempt to gain wealth from either. The person who sees one of these creatures feels no ill effects until he draws near a fire, when his stomach bursts. All the Bella Coola agree that if a man has been close to one he can be saved by the use of certain medicines, but the following stories show that there is no clear-cut opinion as to which are the best. In fact, most families have knowledge of a specific cure which they regard as the most efficacious. [776] [776] [761] [757]

The opportunity to obtain supernatural good luck does not come solely to unfortunate individuals; indeed the Bella Coola state that it is fortuitous. It appears, however, that usually the person who is thus favoured is one who has practised ceremonial chastity, or is, through some other means, in a state of cleanliness pleasing to the supernatural. At any rate the danger of seeing such creatures is less to a man who is in a pure condition than to any other. Further, in most cases they are apt to appear to a person whose ancestors have seen one. [185]

777 * 787 [424] A visitation is not regarded as an inheritable right, but as a tendency; for generations no member of a family may see one of these beasts, but the tradition is preserved, and when one is seen it is recalled that such have been observed by ancestors of the fortunate one. Instances have occurred in which a person has obtained good luck without the tradition of this being in his family, but they are rare. On the other hand, a man may lose the advantage of his possession, even if he own [785] a portion of a *mikiqus* or a *nuiatl*, through failure to observe ceremonial chastity.

776 Some of the Bella Coola believe that the *mikiqus* and the *nuiatl* are the same animal, which can assume these two forms; others that the two are distinct supernatural creatures. In any case the powers and characteristics ascribed to them are the same. Most families have a tradition regarding the appearance of the one or the other to their ancestors, and the information to be derived from them is always about that particular creature. [773] [764] Hence the details here described are probably not all known to any one individual.

* 787 811 182 The different types of appearances, and the different types of taboos called forth, should be noted. These are due to failure on the part of the Bella Coola to rationalize the sum total of their concepts. Each man recounts what he believes to have happened to one of his ancestors or friends, irrespective of whether or not the methods used may be in direct contradiction to those employed by someone else on another occasion. A man who has heard of the *mikiqus*, for example, from his father and mother, may describe contradictory modes of dealing with the creature, and in each case may affirm that disaster would have followed if the method described had not been carried out. Such lack of co-ordination is typical of the Bella Coola.

777 * 787 [773] According to an elderly Kimsquit man, the *mikiqus* was brought down in the beginning of time by one of his own ancestors, Ompensiklak. It is to this fact that he attributes his own near approach to one on two occasions. As it is fre-

quently not until the fourth appearance that a person obtains supernatural good luck, he is still hoping for two more visitations, the second of which he expects to be fruitful. 777 787

One day as he was poling up the Kimsquit River he heard a sound resembling thunder proceeding from a log-jam. From descriptions given him by his father, he knew that this must be the voice of a [illegible], but, not having observed ceremonial chastity, he was afraid to investigate, although the sound seemed to follow his canoe for a considerable distance; it only stopped when another canoe approached. From the fact that he alone heard the voice, he knew that it was for him that the creature had come and only the arrival of other people had deterred it from appearing.

On another occasion the same man was close to the nest of a [illegible]. He and another hunter were together in the forest above the Dean River and both saw the nest behind a waterfall, but for some time each refrained from pointing it out to the other. Towards dusk the first man's attention was called to it by his companion, and they debated on a course of action. Each was desirous of obtaining the benefits to be derived from a successful use of the nest, but each was afraid of the evil consequences should he fail. The friend had observed continence for some time so it was decided that in the morning he should be the one to make the approach; the other man, well versed in these matters, instructed him very carefully what to do. That night both men were too excited to sleep.

Next morning the nest was still in the same place, but the friend hesitated about going up to it, and as they delayed, talking, it vanished in the twinkling of an eye and the opportunity passed.

The nest itself is sufficiently potent to bring good fortune without the [illegible]. Not many years ago a man saw one containing a large green egg which he touched with one end of his weapon. Then he carefully hid his weapon for one year in a cleft of the rocks where no water could reach it, nor did he mention what he had seen to anyone. When the time had 777 224

777 224 stopped, he fetched his musket from its hiding-place and again began to use it. Thenceforth he never missed his aim; every shot brought down an animal.

Before the days of muskets good fortune could likewise be obtained by the discoverer of the nest of a midget. Each contains small particles of the skin of all animals, including human beings, plucked from them in their sleep by humming birds and toads. The finder must touch the nest with his stick, such as is always carried by hunters, then break it and throw it away, saying as he does so:

"May I see you at . . . tomorrow." This means next year. He names his favourite hunting-ground. The finder must [765] not say anything to anyone about his discovery, and for one year he must observe continence. If he then goes to the locality mentioned, he will there find his stick, the one which he broke when he touched the nest, though it will be invisible to anyone else. Adhering to its end will be four hairs of the midget. These he must hide for a year, wrapped in some of his own clothing, taking care that it is an article which he has long [785] worn and which is accordingly saturated with his essence. During this period, too, he must observe continence. Two years after finding the nest, he will be able to hunt with phenomenal [424] success. The knowledge of this proper procedure has been handed down in an ancestral family for many generations.

777 787 On the occasion when the two men had seen the nest they continued their journey, each chiding the other for his failure to take advantage of the opportunity put in his path. Before [776] long they saw a footprint where no man had been and knew that it must be that of *[illegible]*, the supernatural hunter of mountain goats. In spite of remonstrances, the comrade *scraped up a little dirt from the track into his handkerchief*. In this he did wrong, especially as he had failed to take advantage of the opportunity presented to him by the nest of the mountain toad. That night as the two were encamped a slide came thundering down beside them, and they barely escaped [761] with their lives. Not long afterwards the erring man died,

house, a calamity unquestionably due to his recklessness in 777
handling the earth where a supernatural one had trod. 787*

This point illustrates the danger of near approach to a [761]
sniniq, a theme well exemplified in the stories in the next
chapter. Such perils must be counteracted in diverse ways 783
according to the traditions of different ancestral families. One
common method is to seek a lonely spot in the woods and there
hollow out a shelter beneath an overhanging rock or fallen
tree-trunk where the person who has been exposed to danger
must remain for four days, eating nothing and at intervals
scrubbing his body with branches of devil's club, spruce, and [824]
other rough plants. These protect him from the evil effects of
the encounter.

Similar in function to the sniniq, and equally dangerous 777
to the unwary, is the *sisiutl*. The latter is supposed to have 787*
been created on this earth, at Bella Bella, in the beginning of
time by Yulatimot. It was at first the canoe used by this [773]
carpenter, and then turned loose by him to range the moun- [776]
tains and fiords, as it has ever since, equally at home on land
and in water, and in various forms. The following are typical 539
descriptions of the manner in which a *sisiutl* appeared in the 777
past. 787*

> Long ago a man was hunting in the mountains when he saw a salmon, which changed in an instant to a fish-like monstrosity with two heads but no tail. He lunged at it with his stick, and in so doing started a slide which carried the salmon down the mountain. As this was taking place, the hunter said:
>
> "Go down the mountain, salmon; I will get you at the bottom."
>
> When he reached the foot of the new slide he saw the fish lying close to the stream. He cut it up and slung it on a cedar-bark rope. Since this salmon was a *sisiutl*, the first that had ever been seen and killed, the hunter obtained supernatural good luck from the experience. He also took the name of Sisiutl, a designation which has been handed down until recently.

After this adventure many people hunted for the *sisiutl*, 777
and with fair success in early days, but now it cannot be found, 787*

777 owing to the failure of hunters to observe ceremonial chastity.
* 787 When obtained, a *sxiatl* was cut into small pieces, one of which
worn upon the person would make the flesh so hard that an
[789] arrow could not penetrate.

[776] Sometimes the *sxiatl* assumes the form of either a spring or a cohoe salmon. Not long ago a Bella Bella man, travelling in a canoe, ate one of these. Once devoured, it reformed itself, made its way out by consuming the man's lower jaw, then jumped overboard and was lost.

The mere appearance of a *sxiatl* does not necessarily bring misfortune to the beholder, even if he has not the necessary knowledge, or courage, to take advantage of it. The following is an instance.

On one occasion the father's father of a middle-aged Bella Coola was going upstream at the time the salmon were jumping, when, unknown to him, one leaped into the canoe behind him. His first knowledge of anything untoward came to him when the bow rose out of the water, and, looking around, he saw that this was caused by the weight of a grease-covered stone lying in the bottom of his canoe; the salmon had vanished. The man threw overboard his floor-board with the stone on it. When he told his friends afterwards of his experience, they informed him that he had missed an opportunity for obtaining supernatural good fortune, as the "salmon" must have been a *sxiatl*.

789 The *sxiatl* can also be used as a charm. If a man, while in
[776] a pure condition through the observance of ceremonial chastity, eats a small portion of the flesh, it renders him proof against bullet or arrow. An intelligent Bella Coola stated that his father's brother had done so on one occasion, with the result that a bullet, fired by his wife's mother's father, fell harmless at his feet after striking him.

278 Medicine can also be obtained indirectly from a *sxiatl*.
776 When one of these fish-like creatures swims through a pond,
824 wriggling as it goes, it frequently sheds some of its scales.

These become lilies (of the species known as *[illegible]* or *[illegible]*, "The most potent of the pond") from the roots of which a tonic can be brewed. They can be collected by anyone, and the places where they grow are well known, but certain rules must be followed. Before reaching the pond the gatherer must find four spruce saplings, cut from each a bough projecting eastward, and lay these two by two, beside the water, with a space between. After plucking the lily roots he must place them on the ground between the spruce branches and tie the whole into a bundle with strips of dyed and undyed cedar-bark. He must be careful to wind these wrappings clockwise. On arriving at the house where the tonic is to be prepared, the bundle must be thrown in through the smoke-vent, never carried through the door. After these precautions the medicine can be prepared with safety. The roots are cut into thin slices and boiled for four days; a sick person then drinks several cupsful of the brew, which is particularly good for the blood. This remedy is especially effective if the patient is observing ceremonial chastity. The person administering the potion sees to it that the one being treated conforms to certain regulations for forty days. He must not eat fresh meat, fresh salmon, or any food prepared by a widow or a ceremonial woman; he must not approach too closely a girl who is secluded following puberty, and he must observe absolute continence, not even sleeping with his wife. Death follows the breaking of any of these taboos.

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Although supernatural good fortune is most frequently obtained from either a *[illegible]* or a *[illegible]*, it can be derived from other supernatural beings. In such cases the acquisition is seldom dangerous. The following tale describes the *[illegible]*.

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Long before the coming of the white man, but very long after the first people came to this earth, a certain Kimsquit man, *[illegible]*, who was also called *[illegible]*, was snaring mountain goats on Mount [illegible] when he heard on the upper slopes a peculiar cry which he recognized, from descriptions given him by the old people, as the voice of a *[illegible]*.

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This is a supernatural bird about the size of a crow, with a broad hooked beak and blue-black iridescent plumage. Its note resembles that of a swan. The peculiarity of the bird is that its flesh and bones are of mountain-goat grease; even its droppings are of this valuable substance, and it is these which are specially prized. Long ago [illegible] were comparatively common, but all have now fled beyond the range of the white man's rifle.

[illegible] knew what to do, so he crept stealthily up the mountain armed only with his hunting stick. Presently he saw a [illegible] feeding on a mountain goat which had been caught in one of his snares. It answered to the descriptions *[illegible]* had heard, and he could see that its droppings were like solidified mountain goat grease. The hunter crawled near, and took advantage of the instant when the bird was within the goat's stomach to leap forward and club it as it looked up. *[illegible]* twisted the neck until the head separated from the body and flung the former behind him, to the right, without noting where it went. This enables the bird to return since, like all other living creatures, when it seems to die it does no more than shed its cloak of flesh. Then the hunter cut the body into halves, threw the right portion in the same direction as the head, and carefully tied the left half in his cape of cedar bark. Next he collected the droppings and wrapped them in evergreen boughs. Carefully carrying his treasures, he went down the mountain, and hid them in a niche cut in the trunk of a cedar tree, before he went home.

Next day, *[illegible]* did not hunt but returned to the place, drew out the piece of the bird's body, and dried it over a fire, as if he were roasting salmon for winter use. At night he went home, still refraining from telling anyone what he had done. For four days he cured the meat, then carefully closed the niche and went away.

For one year *[illegible]* did not hunt. Then he reopened the recess and saw that the meat was fresh and juicy, as if newly prepared. He left it in place, but drew forth the droppings and carried them off in a small bag. Fortune followed him. By using a small piece of the solidified grease on his traps he had wonderful success. At length *[illegible]* told his fellow-villagers what he had obtained and they were envious of his good luck. He continued to prosper, and at last sold the droppings for a large amount of goods, though he carefully preserved the section of the body itself. When an old man, he showed his son where it was concealed and the latter likewise prospered throughout his life, owing to this possession. When he became old, he in turn told his son about it, so that the young man had the same good fortune as his father and grandfather. But the great-grandson was too lazy to take the trouble of going with his father to the place where the section of the bird was hidden, so the treasure was lost. 777 787

A fourth giver of supernatural good fortune is one of the mythical creatures termed cwaq. This variety lives in the ocean, or rarely in rivers, and can occasionally be seen resting on the surface with its long, golden tresses floating on the water. The hair appears always to be flecked with eagle down, but in reality it is a mass of barnacles, the equivalent of this substance to this under-sea dweller. If the observer is brave, he will paddle cautiously near until he can twist a lock of the hair around his paddle and break it off. He must not touch it with his hands, but must dangle it outside the canoe, still wrapped about his paddle, until he reaches the shore, where he must conceal it in some lonely place for one year. After that period he can use a single hair, or piece of one, as bait; it will be enough to attract animals to his traps or salmon to his weir, exactly as with the mountain goat grease excrement of a pebble or a stick that has come in contact with a giant toad. If the person who has jerked off the hair with his paddle should be foolish or ignorant enough to bring his spoil into his canoe, he, and all with him, are rendered incapable of movement and the craft with its occupants sinks beneath the sea.

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The father's cousin of an informant once saw one of these animals when paddling in company with several companions to Kimsquit. The sea was smooth as glass when their attention was attracted by a number of small ripples, spreading in a half-moon shape from what they realized was the head of a cwaq. The hair covered the ripples, but did not rise or fall with them. The back of the animal's head was towards the canoe so the opportunity seemed favourable for obtaining some of its hair. Cautiously the men paddled nearer, but at the last moment the steersman feared to drive the canoe in among the golden tresses, so veered off and the craft passed along one side of the mass of hair. The animal had shown no sign of being aware of their presence, but it now began to turn away, E:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948

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777 so that its floating locks remained between them and its head. 8 781 As it turned, the hair moved with it, so that, although the impression remained of a floating mat, there must have been some motive power to cause it to remain streaming out straight behind. Each strand moved through the ripples without being affected. Though the paddlers strained to the utmost to see the animal's face it thwarted their efforts by this continuous slow turning, until at last they went on their way, disappointed.

538 777 Yet another creature from which supernatural good fortune has been obtained is the Mother of Snakes, a creature described in the following story.

8 781 236 [776] A family living at *[illegible]* was reduced to the point of starvation through the failure of their salmon-weir. It seemed as if the fish avoided it. One day a son of one of the owners, who had been in trouble with a woman in the lower valley, went off into the woods not far from his village, where he saw what he thought was a black bear. When it came nearer he realized that its chest was tipped with silver and that its tongue kept darting far beyond its jaws, hence that it must be the Mother of Snakes. This creature combines the qualities of bear and snake; it is about the size of the former, and it appears to have a serpent wrapped around its chest. It always pursues mortals and slays them, unless they [784] know the proper means of escape. Luckily, the youth's father had long ago warned him what to do if chased by one, so he at once dashed off. First he ran downhill, but the animal gained on him; then he ran uphill, but still the monster drew nearer. The only way the fugitive could increase his lead was by ascending or descending in zigzags, since the beast's heavy legs then kept slipping. All day the pursuit continued, until towards dusk, when the youth was almost exhausted, he saw at last what he was looking for, a stump with splinters, projecting upwards. Pushing them apart with his hands, he leapt through the opening thus made, then circled the tree once more, and pulled away one of the jagged splints. Now the Mother of Snakes must always follow directly in the tracks of its quarry, and as it jumped through the passage the youth struck it across the back with the splinter which he had pulled out. Down fell the monster dead.

With his knife the lad cut off some of the animal's meat which he carried home, saying nothing to his father. Early the next morning the old man went to look at his salmon-weir, but as usual it was empty. As soon, however, as his son threw some in, the river became packed with salmon, all heading towards the trap which was soon filled.

"It seems as if you attracted the salmon like a magnet," said the father to his son. 777

The latter did not answer immediately, but later he said: 787

"You were right," and he told him what had happened. [539]

"You have obtained supernatural good luck," the old man replied simply. [226]

Following his son's instructions the father prepared canoes and boxes to bring back the flesh of the Mother of Snakes. They collected every scrap of it, which they preserved very carefully, and used small portions as bait to attract salmon to their weir with such success that they became wealthy.

Another supernatural being from whom supernatural good fortune may be obtained is *Slmanait-ān-a*, "The Female Mourner." [776] When a chief dies she comes to wail, wandering through the woods near the village, where sometimes she can be seen in the form of a weeping woman. As she cries, she ejects mucus from her nose, which solidifies into a glass-like substance about a foot in length. Anyone who sees her should take the transformed mucus, and wrap it in some article of his own clothing; it will bring him good fortune. About midnight of June 21, 1923, the infant daughter of a Bella Coola died, and about seven o'clock on the following morning the wailing was heard[1] in the woods behind the missionary's house. The brother of the dead child's father rushed off to try to find the weeping one. Luckily he did not succeed, because he did not know about collecting the mucus, and trouble would have come to him had he seen the supernatural being without knowing how to deal with it; in fact, even to hear *Slmanait-ān-a* is considered an omen of death. [776] [768]

It will be seen from the foregoing specific instances that supernatural good luck is usually obtained by the slaying of some powerful creature. But, since every living creature is endowed with superhuman power, it follows that any object obtained from a bird or an animal that has acted in a peculiar way may be the cause of supernatural good fortune if it be kept for one year in the manner previously described. Some- [825] [224]

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[1] Since the Bella Coola believe that it was heard, the incident is recorded as a fact.

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777 times a man finds a piece of the thick bark of the fir in one of
* 781 his traps; if he throws it away nothing happens, but if he conceal
[224] it in a hidden cranny for one year and then use it for bait he will have supernatural good luck. Another bringer of good fortune is a giant crab, about two feet in diameter, sometimes found far in the forest. There is no danger attached to the appearance of either of these manifestations of the supernatural, which have merely the potential ability to bestow good fortune if the person seeing them knows and practises the proper ritual.

777 Sometimes, long ago, when a number of seals were seen
* 781 approaching the shore a man would notice that they were
224 peculiar. One would disappear beneath the surface, to emerge as a beaver, the beaver would vanish beneath the waves only to come up as a bear, a mountain goat, a deer, or some other animal. If a hunter wished to have phenomenal success at goat hunting, for example, he would wait until one of the seals appeared as a goat and then kill it. The carcass would drift ashore, as a seal, but on being cut open a stone shaped like a mountain goat would always be found in the stomach. To obtain success the hunter would wrap this in a piece of worn clothing, and hide it away beneath an overhanging ledge in some lonely spot in the woods. If left there for one year the stone became a magnet, and its owner, carrying it with him on his hunting expeditions, had amazing success. He had obtained supernatural good fortune, for one particular object. If, after cutting open the seal-mountain goat, the hunter failed to wrap up the stone in some of his clothing it vanished of its own accord.

The last Bella Coola to have supernatural good luck from this source was *Wiods*, who died about 1910. His extraordinary success as a hunter was derived from a number of stones which his father had obtained from the stomachs of seals in the form of land animals. His prosperity ended when he sold his collection of stones to a Bella Bella man who still uses them with great effect.

Supernatural good fortune has also been obtained from the "Mothers" of certain plants. 777

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Among the roots that are sought for when a man intends to give a potlatch are those of clover and of *ōkāl*, a grass which grows on flats near the sea. Once the aunt of an elderly (in 1923) Bella Coola woman dug up the Mother of *Ōkāl*, a root, thick as her thumb, but shaped like a woman. Perhaps the reason that she found it was because she was digging in the darkness, after the setting of the sun. The woman, ignorant of the proper procedure, did nothing, with the result that her hands became painfully swollen. If she had wrapped the root in a portion of her used clothing and kept it hidden for one year, without saying anything about her find, it would have brought her supernatural good luck. [557]

Another woman found an elderberry as large as a baseball, and shaped like the mask worn above the forehead by a member of the *sisauk* society. Her father, an old man skilled in such matters, wrapped the berry in his daughter's soiled clothing and kept it carefully hidden in her box. It brought her supernatural good luck because, no matter how much or how often she gave away presents, goods always came to her.

SUPERNATURAL GOOD LUCK FROM STONES

Stones are among the objects from which supernatural good luck can be obtained. A person who has long observed ceremonial chastity may be fortunate enough to hear what seems to be the weeping of a new-born infant, as he passes in his canoe beneath some steep ocean cliff. Then, if he watches, he will see a stone being born from a larger one at the level of the sea. If the observer takes the infant-stone, wraps it in his soiled clothing and stores it among his possessions, it will act as other bringers of supernatural good fortune by luring all kinds of valuables to the owner. In fact, such a stone is said to be so potent that if left in an empty box for some time, it will attract enough skins to fill the receptacle. 777

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823 The last appearance of such a stone was in Dean Channel, to the father of an elderly Bella Coola, who was too amazed to take advantage of it. As far as could be ascertained, in 1923 there was only one stone which was regarded by the owner as having brought him good fortune. It had been obtained by one of his elderly relatives who died about 1906. This man had been walking beside the Bella Coola River one spring day when he happened to notice a woodpecker perched on one of the posts supporting an olachen net. Without taking his eyes from it, he idly stooped down and threw a pebble at the bird which flew to the bank, lit on a pile of stones, and became one of them. Realising that here might be the means of obtaining supernatural good fortune, if properly handled, the man watched for some time, then went forward, picked up the stone, covered it with evergreen boughs and wrapped the whole in a strip torn from the white-man's shirt he was wearing. With the axe he was carrying he cut a recess in a tree, put the object in it and covered the hiding place with the original bark. He said nothing about it, but the stone brought him such good luck that he obtained large quantities of everything desirable.

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823 In later years the man, after replacing the stone in the hole of the tree, went away to Victoria; when he returned, years later, it was still there. By placing it in his box he again prospered in all his ventures. When an old man the owner presented the stone to a relative who still treasures it. It is red, about a foot in length, shaped somewhat like a human figure without arms or legs, but with a prominent navel opening.

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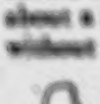

Fig. 3
Luck-bringing Stone

See Fig. 3. The owner has kept it for years, hiding it even from his wife and allowing no white man to see it. He had been perfectly willing to have photographs taken of most of his ceremonial objects, but declined to permit this to be done with his valued stone, and carefully hid it in a box after showing it. When he wished to use the transformed bird, it was wrapped in his old shirt, together with a small amount of money or what-

ever object was desired, and then set in a window of his house so 777
that the sun could fall on one uncovered end. The owner firmly 823
believes that this stone has brought him money on various occasions, and will do so again, though whether he expects the coins to be found inside of the wrapping, or merely to come to him in the course of trade is questionable. According to Bella Coola belief, they ought to appear beside the stone, but as this man attributes any good fortune to it, he never has any difficulty in proving its powers.

This stone is also used as a means of increasing the efficacy [515]
of prayer. When its owner washes ceremonially in the river
before eating in the morning, he rubs it over his body as if it [789]
were soap and requests it to make him strong, make him well, grant him his desires, and so forth.

SHAMANISM

More important to the Bella Coola than any other mani- 104
festation of the supernatural is that power which makes an 756*
individual either an *ălukwala* or an *ăskankots*. The former is
a person who, owing to ability granted him by a supernatural [787]*
being, is able to perform miraculous feats, especially in curing [788]
the sick; the latter is one with similar powers obtained from a ghost.* It is impossible to translate either of these terms accurately; the designation "shaman" is accordingly used in this monograph to describe both types of supernaturally endowed individuals. The most common and most important method of obtaining such power is from a living supernatural being; a person receiving the boon in this manner will be termed "shaman," and one empowered by a ghost will be known as "shaman from the dead."

The Bella Coola believe that long ago men were so much 756*
more powerful than at present, and so close to the supernatural, 773
that all were virtually shamans. The prowess and adventures 538

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*Shamans vary, of course, [illegible], but as the Bella Coola distinguish between shamans whose powers are derived from these two sources, it is accurate to follow their example.

* 756 of these demi-gods of antiquity are favourite themes for stories.
538 The powers of the later shamans have been far less than those of their forefathers, and their exploits have been of a somewhat
[773] different character. Hence it is possible to divide the subject into three sections:

(1) Shamanism in the distant past.
(2) Modern shamanism.
(3) Shamans from the dead.

SHAMANISM IN THE DISTANT PAST

Information on this phase is contained in stories and a few anecdotes which describe the achievements of ancient demi-gods, endowed with miraculous powers of various kinds. The tales are similar in type to those dealing with the granting of supernatural aid to the unfortunate, so that it is in many cases difficult to differentiate them. As might be expected these narratives are not exact. Frequently the teller does not know from what being the ancient shaman received his power, nor can he explain the abilities described, which are different from, and superior to, those with which he is familiar. In fact it is customary to describe any mythical hero as a shaman.

[424] Tales of this kind can be related by any one; they are not the personal property of a specific family. Many of them, that of *Waxwal·is*, for example, are well known and are told and retold constantly.

In addition to information obtained from stories, a few isolated facts are remembered regarding ancient shamans. It
* 756 is thought that various taboos connected with hunting were
223 learnt by them in the distant past. Such restrictions and in-
[224] junctions were firmly believed in and strictly adhered to until a few years ago, and many of them are still observed. The usual method of hunting harlequin ducks is, or was until recently, from a canoe, with a sapling set up in the bow to hide the hunter, crouched with bow and arrow in readiness; several shamans, however, were able to kill the birds by merely
[262] waving the butt-end of a paddle towards them. Such power

1;McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948
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would be of enormous value, since the Bella Coola consider these ducks a great delicacy, and say that their flesh resembles that of seals. In fact, when an invitation to a seal feast is given the words used mean, "come to eat harlequin ducks." 756 262 223

No attempt was made to collect all the shaman stories current in Bella Coola, but the subject is amply illustrated by those gathered, of which the following is representative. [illegible]

The Adventures of W'asmal'is

Long, long ago, there dwelt among the people who lived on the shore of Dean Channel and were partly Kimsquit, partly Bella Bella, a mighty shaman, *W'asmal'is*. He was a married man with a son just learning to walk, and an adopted son about twelve years old. One day *W'asmal'is* told the latter to fetch water, but the lad was lazy and made no motion to obey, so his foster father kicked him angrily. Whereat the boy cried out:

"What are you hurting me for? Why don't you kick your wife or your partner? They are always sleeping together when you are away."

W'asmal'is apparently paid no attention to this, merely saying:

"Stop crying. I am sorry I kicked you so hard. Run along and get the water."

W'asmal'is, who was a great hunter, began to get his canoe ready for a seal hunting trip, and told his adopted son to accompany him. The two set off within a few hours. *W'asmal'is* owned a stick of which one end contained the power of causing death, and the other of restoring life; he had only to make the motions of throwing this stick at a living creature, death-dealing end foremost, and the one at which it was pointed fell dead. Many seals had been killed by this means when *W'asmal'is* asked the boy:

"What was it you said when I kicked you?"

By this time the lad had regained his temper and was sorry he had disclosed what he knew.

"I said nothing," he answered, "but gave a shout of pain."

"You lie," *W'asmal'is* calmly replied. "You said that my wife was sleeping with my partner."

The boy, realizing that all was known, answered truthfully:

"Yes, I did say that. I have often seen her doing so when you were absent."

It was late afternoon by this time and *W'asmal'is* at once headed back to the village, which they reached soon after dark. No one saw their approach, so *W'asmal'is* told the boy to stay with the canoe and the seals

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

At length the pursuers abandoned their efforts and [illegible] went on, never to return.

[illegible] and his son travelled for many days, always seeking a place to settle, until one day they saw a large town on the beach, with smoke coming from only one of the houses. The canoe landed, and [illegible] left the lad in the canoe on the beach while he went on to investigate. He could find no one in any of the houses, until at last he came to the one from which smoke emerged, in which he saw an old blind man cooking food and his beautiful daughter making cedar-bark mats. He entered quietly and sat beside the man without speaking. As the latter lifted some food from the pot and poured it on a dish, [illegible] took it and hid it under his cloak. The old man felt for his food, then said to his daughter:

"I have lost the food that I have been cooking. Some one must have stolen it."

She did not look up as she laughed back:

"Nonsense! As you know, there is no one in the whole country but we two."

Again the old man poured out some of the food and again [illegible] hid it, so once more he complained to his daughter. This time she looked up and saw the stranger.

"You are right," she said to her father. "A man is sitting beside you."

"What do you want?" she asked [illegible]. "Whence have you come? Why have you stolen my father's food?"

He answered her last query.

"I was only playing, here it is," and took it from under his cape.

He had fallen in love with the girl and said to her father:

"Please let me marry your daughter."

"If you restore my sight you can have her," the father replied.

"I am a powerful man," [illegible] laughed.

With that he took the old man's head between his hands and spat in his eyes, as he rubbed them with his hands; at once the sight was restored. The father kept his bargain and agreed to his daughter's marriage.

They asked [illegible] if he were alone, and when he answered that his adopted son was in a canoe on the beach, they called the boy in and the four sat down to a meal. There was no water in the house and [illegible] told the lad to fetch some, but at once the old man and his daughter stopped him.

"No, no," they said. "You can't get any here, there is no well near.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

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the slave of the chief was gathering firewood, he projected his influence to him to cause him to [illegible] work at a hollow tree wherein [illegible] had concealed himself. The slave was using a stone wedge, and when this penetrated into the centre of the tree, [illegible] broke its cutting edge, thereby terrifying the tribesman, who feared what his master might say at the loss of a valuable tool. The slave drove in another, and again the [illegible] broke this, increasing the forebodings of the slave. Then [illegible] appeared from within the hollow tree and offered to repair the broken wedges in return for assistance. The slave, truly was glad to do anything that would save him from the wrath of his master, although [illegible] when [illegible] asked him whether he had seen any stranger in the land.

"Yes, the chief returned yesterday with a very beautiful woman."

"That was my wife. Will you help me to recover her?" asked [illegible].

"Yes," the slave said.

Then [illegible] instantly repaired the broken wedges. The slave suggested a possible plan for rescuing the woman.

"Every evening, just before nightfall," he said, "I carry firewood into the house, and then that goes out again for water. If you hide close to the door, you will be able to see where your wife is sitting when it is opened for me to bring in the fuel. When I return with the water I will pour it on the fire to extinguish it, and you may be able to rush in and seize your wife in the darkness and confusion."

The plan was adopted. [illegible] helped the slave fill the canoe with firewood, and [illegible] then returned to the chieftain's house. [illegible] hid himself within a hollow log which the slave set upright outside the house in such a position that he was able to see in through the front door. The slave carried in the rest of the firewood and the watching [illegible] saw his wife sitting near the fire. When sent out for water, the slave chose the largest bucket in the house and returned with it brimming full; then, as he passed the fire, he stumbled so that the liquid was thrown on the flames, extinguishing them. In [illegible] [illegible] rushed and seized his wife with a [illegible].

"I am [illegible]."

Then fled out of the door, to the place where he had landed from the world above, and where the rope was still hanging down. He made the agreed signal for hoisting, but there was no answer from the [illegible] who had been left in the canoe. Climbing however, [illegible] and his wife climbed up the rope to the canoe, where they found a skeleton, all that was left of the [illegible] man. To [illegible] and his wife it seemed as if they had only been absent a brief time, but they had been in the land of the

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948

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supernatural, so that nearly a year had elapsed on this earth, and during that time the faithful lad had perished of starvation at his post. He had turned to the bones, but [illegible] used the life-giving end of his stick to revive him, and the three returned happily to the village.

In an almost identical second version of this story, collected from another informant, the community to which [illegible] belongs is not mentioned and the boy is not an adopted son but a young slave. The adventures are the same even in details, except that before [illegible] presents his wife with her lover's head he instructs the slave to remove the plugs from the beached canoes of his fellow-villagers. This does not seem to have deterred the latter, for [illegible] was followed as in the foregoing tale and, as there, released his cloud mist in order to escape his pursuers.

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It is not claimed that any recently deceased shamans had power equal to that of [illegible], although remarkable ability has been attributed to several living in the last century. The mother of one Bella Coola woman is believed to have been able to see the details of the sun and moon. She stated that on the latter were mountains and snow.

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Even more striking is the following account of a Bella Bella shaman, who had visitations from supernatural beings during the last century. On one occasion, when performing a dance on the beach, he walked into a small hill; the spectators could hear his song continuing, and soon he emerged on the other side, having passed through the obstacle. Later on, the same man was convicted of murder by a white judge and sentenced to death. His fellow tribesmen asked why he did not save himself and he replied that he would do so in his own time. The judge pardoned him and set him free, which was regarded as confirmation of his claim. His first visions had come to him when in the cemetery at [illegible], but his most spectacular experience was when a slide descended and entombed him as he was paddling in his canoe on the ocean. For one day he remained under the slide, as well as under the water, then he reappeared and paddled on his way.

MODERN SHAMANISM

Although the powers ascribed to modern shamans are less than those attributed to their fellows of old, yet a shaman is a person endowed with mysterious ability and wonderful knowledge, due to personal contact with supernatural beings. Hence, he is regarded as somewhat uncanny and, though respected, is likewise feared. The power is not inheritable. There is a tendency for the descendants of a shaman to have like favours granted to them, but this is nothing more than a tendency on the part of the supernatural beings to confer their boons in this manner; it is not a right. Thus anyone, man or woman, rich or poor, young or old, slave or member of an ancient family, may become a shaman.

The Obtaining of Shamanistic Power

A shaman obtains his power from a supernatural visitant, usually the mythical woman *[illegible]* (also called [illegible]) bringing him a name, four songs, and sometimes the ability to cure a specific disease. No methods are sure to attract her, but by means of magical rites a man may so purify himself that she will be likely to visit him. A second, and the most usual manner of becoming a shaman, is to receive a visit from *[illegible]* when grievously ill. In either case a shaman is often termed a "Returned One."

In the first case, the wooing of shamanistic powers by magical means, it is often a matter of years before a man becomes a shaman. Sometimes the parents of a small boy will notice that he is fond of lying around the house with a far-away look in his eyes, and appears unwilling to take part in the games of the other lads. Especially if the father is a shaman, or if one of his ancestors has had the ability, the parents watch carefully to see whether or not this is merely a passing mood. If it continues, they realize that their son may become a shaman. Although there are dangers attached to the profession, they will usually assist their child in every possible way. They may know how one of their ancestors obtained

[illegible]

[illegible]

the power, and will tell their son to try the same method. In this way a descendant of shamans has a better chance to become one than anybody else. Another indication that a person is likely to become a shaman is to be wakened from sleep by a scream. As he sits up, hastily, thinking that someone has called him, all that he sees is the disappearing rodent. Mice have a rather peculiar position in the eyes of the Bella Coola, since they believe that these animals regard themselves as superior to mankind.

"The food of mortals is our food," say the mice.

His parents now tell the boy that he is likely to become a shaman, and that he must accordingly take great care of himself. If he is an adult, he will begin to observe ceremonial chastity, and in any case will spend much time alone, avoiding the trivialities of life in the village, and will think little about mundane matters. At intervals he goes alone to the forest, especially to some spot beside a waterfall, the kind of place that supernatural beings frequent. There he lies down, sometimes for several days, with evergreen boughs spread beneath and above him. These are clean and nullify the mortal odour so objectionable to supernatural beings, so that his chance of obtaining a visitation is increased. He does not know what may appear to him, but he carefully remembers his dreams[1] which, as his thoughts are centred on lofty subjects, are likewise about matters of importance. If his dream is sufficiently clear to warrant the term vision, the recipient should remain, fasting, for four days on the spot where it occurred, and should say nothing about it when he returns home. His strength increases with every vision, until at last, sometimes after a period of thirty years or more, he will obtain a real one and the power to cure a disease. Sometimes dreams come to him in the village, but they are more likely to occur in a secluded spot in the forest. It is impossible to obtain examples of these dreams since, for a long time, no one has been brave enough to seek power in this way, but their type can be judged by the shamanistic performances hereafter described, many of which are believed to have been derived from them.

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[1] The Bella Coola do no differentiate between mental images that appear to them and those seen during waking hours.

The members of different families have accumulated various means of making a person "clean" so that a supernatural being is likely to visit him. Almost every family knows one or more of these, and an individual who shows signs of becoming a shaman will be taught how to use his family method. In conjunction with this, the seeker after power will further purify himself by abstaining from sexual intercourse, by frequent washing in [illegible], by eating small portions of the tails of [illegible] and the heads of [illegible], and by avoiding food prepared by a widow or by a girl secluded after puberty. In this way he hopes that his dreams will be fruitful, and that a vision may be granted him as he lies in the forest on his evergreen couch.

The following are some of the methods to be practised at dawn every fourth day.

(1) The seeker after power locates a small stream on either side of which there are growing two clumps of devil's club. Before he breaks off the four stems and strips from them the bark, which he uses to scrub himself in the cold water. As he does so he says:

"Please give me power that I may see what I wish to see."

This is addressed to the plant itself, not to the supreme god. It is a request to be able to see some one of the many supernatural beings that roam the forests, but which are invisible, to appear only as animals, to all but shamans. The words are not a fixed formula, and similar ones are said in connection with each method. After washing, the seeker for power throws the bark and peeled stems into the water.

(2) Again selecting a secluded stream, the would-be shaman picks up a smooth, water-worn pebble from one side of it, and with this rubs his body, then carefully replaces it in the exact position from which he took it. He repeats the process with a second stone, crosses the stream and does likewise with two stones from the farther margin.

[illegible]

[illegible]

(c) Choosing a place where two small hemlocks are growing on each side of a small stream, the seeker after power bends down the two saplings so that their branches reach the water, and with these scours his body, the spines frequently ripping his skin. When finished, he releases the saplings, which fly back to their original position.

(d) Another method is to devour four small sections, each rather longer than a match, of false hellebore root. These are drunk with cold water and cause vomiting. The use of this plant is not limited to dawn, nor is it necessary to repeat it every fourth day. Apparently, the usual prayer is not said with it.

Any, or all, of these methods, especially if combined with the observance of ceremonial chastity, may purify the performer so that he will be able to see what is not vouchsafed to other persons. [illegible], or one of the other supernatural beings, may grant him a revelation with shaman's power. This does not always happen, as the above means of purification are not compulsory, but in many myths where the hero obtained supernatural power it was due to his having tried one of the above, or a similar ritual.

The most common method of becoming a shaman is through the appearance of [illegible] when a person is ill. This woman, who always wears a blanket-like cape decorated with dried and [illegible], is able to travel anywhere at phenomenal speed. She, or some other supernatural being, may appear to a sick person irrespective of sex, whether or not ceremonial chastity has been observed. It seems as if she took pity on the sufferer and came to bring relief. The following are typical examples.

A woman had long been crippled with rheumatism. She was so helpless and weak that she spent most of her time curled in a heap on the floor, heedless of the ashes and dirt with which she was covered. Her friends barely attended to her wants. One day she heard a drumming on the roof, though no one else could hear it, nor could they hear the whistle with which

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[776]

Tlitcaplitana always announces her approach. The supernatural woman appeared, clad in her usual costume, and struck the old woman over the heart with her stick. The other occupants of the house realized that something strange had happened to the sick person. She crawled four times around the fire, sunwise, shaking her hands as well as her infirmity would permit, and endeavoured to dance in time to the songs that she could hear *Tlitcaplitana* singing. Her friends did not interfere with her, seeing that something peculiar had come over her, and that in one so ill, any change must be for the better. The patient later described how *Tlitcaplitana* seized and shook her as one shakes a dusty blanket, and how she heard the sound of small particles falling from her—it was the sickness. With that *Tlitcaplitana* vanished and the rheumatic patient stood up, cured.

Another old woman had been so ill for four years with rheumatism, that she could hardly move from her sleeping place, when a supernatural being came to her. She heard a voice saying:

"Get up! Mortal."

An invisible hand grasped her hair and led her four times around in a circle, sunwise. As usual, a tune and songs were vouchsafed to this woman, though these have now been forgotten.

One informant, a woman now past middle age, was once returning to Bella Coola from Rivers Inlet when she was taken violently ill with a stomach-ache. That night as she slept uneasily on the shore she heard a voice singing. Listening attentively, she learnt the words and tunes of two songs, and heard the voice say:

"Your name is *[illegible]*."

Unquestionably the visitor was *Tlitcaplitana*, and if she had appeared, the woman would have become a shaman. Unfortunately for her, this boon was not granted; she received nothing more than the name, "Power to Use."

What is the explanation of the songs which shamans believe e

* 756 they hear? In this case, for example, a reliable woman asserted
* 787 that she had heard two, though she had since forgotten them
as they had no social significance. Bella Coola shaman songs
[578] are of a simple type, with few words,[1] and with tunes of no great difficulty, all closely akin to one pattern. Hence they could easily be invented by anyone. A person who recovers from a severe illness is expected, both by others and by himself, to have had such an experience, consequently it is easy for him to interpret the confused thoughts of a sickness as a visitation from a supernatural being. Thus it seems probable that a shaman deludes himself as well as others with regard to the songs.

* 787 A certain man had a similar experience, when he too heard *Tlitcaplitana* without actually seeing her. He was in a canoe at the time, near the point between North Bentinck Arm and Labouchere Channel, and distinctly heard her whistle, accompanied by four beats on a drum. This may have been an omen,
[763] as his sister died soon afterwards. Occasionally, *Tlitcaplitana* appears in dreams and gives information, as she did to this man's mother, instructing her to brush her body with spruce boughs to avoid smallpox. She followed this advice and both she and her husband escaped unscathed from the epidemic.

* 756 A shaman who died about 1920 received his power in the
* 787 following manner.

He had been spearing salmon in the Bella Coola River one autumn when one of the fish crumbled to dust in his hands as he removed it from the water. From this event arose suppurations which covered his body; no one could cure him, and by December he had wasted away to a walking skeleton. Then, one morning, he heard whistling which he was sure must be the voice of *Tlitcaplitana*. He wisely said nothing about this, nor was it heard by anyone else. The same sound was repeated on the next two mornings, and on the fourth she appeared.

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[1] Sometimes with none at all, merely a continued humming which is regarded as a tune. Examples of these songs are given later (II, p. [illegible]).

"I am *[illegible]*," she said. "Everyone calls on me to visit the sick, and henceforth they will likewise seek you and your basin." 776* 777*

Something entered his stomach, causing it to heave violently, and he felt that the sickness had left him. He sent for the singers and repeated to them the words that *Tlitcaplitana* had chanted; these formed the text of the shaman's song which he used on future occasions. While giving them to the singers, he endeavoured to dance, but was too feeble to do more than weakly shake his hands. From that time on, *[illegible]* was able to cure the sick.

This last account is typical. *Tlitcaplitana* appears, inserts something into the body of the patient to cure him, sings one or more songs, gives the sufferer a name, and then vanishes. [755] The curing power thus bestowed remains within the person benefited; it is this that enables him to heal others if *Tlitcaplitana* has so decided. In such cases, there is mention of a "basin" in the song, and the one who has just recovered will be able to treat others, especially those suffering from the same malady as himself. [756] The reference to a basin is because such vessels are used during ceremonies. To the Bella Coola a shaman is one who has had such an experience and has publicly claimed it, whether or not he can cure the sick.

Tlitcaplitana is known by many names, in accordance with her ability to treat many diseases, and the designation she bestows depends upon the malady cured. The following are some of the names received from her by shamans. [776] [553]

[illegible], "The Strengthener of the Breath." This name was given to a person who was cured when he found breathing very difficult. The text of his song was: [551]

"*Tlitcaplitana* gave me (the name) *[illegible]* with a small object to aid the breathing of the very sick." [553]

[illegible]. This has the same significance as the last. [551]

[illegible], "The Shaman Near the Fire."

[illegible], "The Shaman Who Makes Noise Only with

His Body." A dancer with this name does not use a rattle when curing.

[illegible], "Quivering To and Fro." This refers to the movements of a dancer when he dances for curative purposes.

[illegible], "The Reviver." This is derived from *[illegible]*, to revive another, and as this is done for curative purposes, the name really signifies, "The One Who Restores to Strength."

It is believed that *Tlitcaplitana* often uses her own discretion about visiting the sick, but that sometimes a number of the supernatural beings confer as to whether an ailing person should be helped, and if so request her to visit him. Sometimes the patient is so sick that an enormous amount of power must be imparted to help him, and he dies from its excess. In such cases he is revived by *[illegible]*, a male being whose sole function is to restore those whom *Tlitcaplitana* has slain. This return to life has frequently occurred when relatives have been mourning the death of the patient, who is generally able to recount all that he has seen. Sometimes *Tlitcaplitana*, instead of herself bestowing power upon a sick person, carries him[1] away to a locality in which a supernatural being was [illegible] in the beginning of time.

Although it is *Tlitcaplitana* who most frequently cures a sick person, there are many instances of other supernatural beings having done so. Little seems to be known of them, except that they have been recorded as appearing to give a patient their name and to cure him of his malady. So far as could be ascertained, they are thought of only in connection with apparitions to the sick and, since in function they exactly resemble *Tlitcaplitana*, and as it is she who is most commonly spoken of, it is possible, or even probable, that these are actually the same being under other names. The following beings are of this type.

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[1] The Bella Coola do not [illegible] as to the sex of the power [illegible] [illegible] they [illegible] that it [illegible] to the [illegible].

[illegible]

[illegible]

Nisitsatuklais, "The Restorer." He is able to cure the sick even when at the point of death.

Ilsnklaikmay, "The Saviour." He can rescue persons who have been injured by other supernatural beings.

Nunustomaikmay, "The One Who is Thought Of." Having powerful curing abilities, people think of him when ill.

Ilsaskalaimay, "The Open-Mouthed One." His mouth is always open to suck forth sickness.

Nutlkikusmalpa, "He Whose Basis Is in His Own Body." A person who receives the ability to cure from this being does not use the customary basin.

Sxtaol. It is said that many Rivers Inlet shamans have received their powers from this creature, which is accordingly well known to the Bella Coola in this connection, although few of their own people are said to have been benefited by it.

Since all animals are supernatural, it follows that any of them can cure the sick. Instances are remembered of this, in which the patient received a name differing slightly from that of his animal benefactor. Salmon, especially cohoes and early spring salmon, are commonly patron curers and many sick people have received aid from them. It is recognized that the former are uncanny since they have the ability to hide themselves in insignificant streams. One man was cured by a tree which gave him a rattle-like shaman's song, picturing the crackling and swaying of its branches. More often, however, a supernatural animal merely speaks to a man without making him a shaman.

Two courses are open to the patient who has been cured by such a visitation. He may at once proclaim his powers, or he may say nothing about them in the hope of obtaining further revelations and further names. From a single experience he has received a certain amount of power, but the more he has, the greater this will be. If he decides not to wait, he at once calls the singers and repeats to them the words and tunes of the songs he has received. When later on he gives presents to validate his shamanistic name, it becomes publicly recognized

756 757 that he is a shaman, and his future status depends on his success in curing those who appeal to him. If the man decides [553] [554] not to make use of his experience, he must not mention the name of his apparition, as to do so would not only prevent further benefits, but would cause the return of the disease from which he had been suffering. Some shamans have waited until they have received three or four separate visitations, acquiring a name at each; and a Bella Bella man was known to have had ten. Whether or not it is wise at once to display shaman's power is a matter on which there is no general agreement. On the one hand by long, and perhaps fruitless, waiting, a man postpones the social esteem which would have been his if he had at once displayed his prowess, gambling with his chances of receiving still greater gifts. While awaiting further visitations, a man may be able to make use of the power already received, although he cannot do so formally as an accredited shaman. Thus one man, who long ago was visited by a supernatural being, but has made no public claim of his apparition, [755] is able to cure stomach-ache among his own grandchildren by massaging the stomach as if to force something from it, and then puffing this something, four times, from his spread hands. Still hoping for power, he declined to say by which supernatural being he had been visited.

The following account was obtained from one of the few old Bella Coola who claim to have had shamanistic experiences. It describes what is done when the patient decides not to wait for further revelations:

When comparatively young, the informant slept one night in the forest with a companion. On awakening the following morning, they found a trail of dried blood leading to their blankets. They examined themselves and found no wound, so concluded that the blood could not be their own, and, therefore, was a mystery, over which they worried for a few days but then forgot. About a week later, the narrator of the incident dreamed that a strange creature came to him; he did not know what it was, but it terrified him. A few minutes later he got up and was working at the fire when his nose began to bleed. The people tried the usual remedies, but they were without effect, and the nose continued to bleed for several days. Shaman after shaman was called in, but none could do anything for him; and the bleeding continued until his face became so swollen that he could not see without lifting the puffy flesh, while his body wasted away and he became weaker and weaker, at last sinking into unconsciousness. His friends assembled in the house thinking he was on the point of death; in fact, one burnt his nose to ascertain whether or not he was still alive; the scar is still visible. Then he recovered slightly, his eyes roved around, and he saw the people as in a dream, and wondered why they had gathered. Next he heard his mother weeping, realized what was the cause, and asked her to stop. The watchers, seeing his eyes and returning consciousness when he had been at the point of death, understood that a supernatural being had come to him in his hour of need and that he would become a shaman. He told those who were working over him to cease their efforts to cure him, as they were powerless.

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That night as he lay feeble in his house, he began to vomit, and succeeded in ridding his stomach of a large mass of coagulated blood. He and his mother examined it, and both thought he would die from its loss. In this they erred, for if he had not succeeded in getting rid of it he would have died. The night that he slept in the forest, he had lain in the path of *[illegible]* who can travel only on fixed tracks and that malicious being had inserted the blood in him, the last of which he had just vomited.

[776]

The sufferer gradually grew stronger, but suffered whenever sunlight fell on him; accordingly his parents blocked all chinks in the walls so that he lay in darkness. A few days later he had a relapse, and was again at the point of death, when he heard, inside his head, a buzzing sound like that made by a bee; it was the tune, and also the words of a shaman's song which [illegible] was bringing to him. He could see her faintly,

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and heard her utter the name that was to be his, as a shaman, *[illegible]*. He began to shake his hands as if dancing, for he was too feeble to do more, and began to sing the song. His mother at once called in the singers who listened, learning it for future use. The man is firmly convinced that if his mother had not thus called in the singers so speedily he would, after four days, have received another vision, and with it real shamanistic power. As it is, he is a shaman, since he was cured when at the point of death by *[illegible]* and received a name and song from her, but he is unable himself to effect cures. As soon as the singers had departed, his mother at once began to make for him a collar formed of alternate bands of dyed, and [292] undyed, cedar-bark. This is the distinctive decoration worn constantly by a shaman for a certain period after receiving his powers, and at all times when dancing. Within a few days all the inhabitants of the village were called in and the man's [illegible] family distributed presents, thus validating his shamanistic [illegible] name. Such presents are not returnable; "they have become nothing" for the designation. Thus accredited, a shaman is in a position to start curing, if his song has contained a reference to a basin, otherwise, as in the present case, he is merely a shaman in a social sense, not professionally. There is thought to be actually within the new shaman's body, some peculiar [292] power which is too potent to allow him to mix with others. Accordingly he wears the distinctive collar, which serves as a [illegible] warning to menstruating women and others who are unclean to remain at a distance, and he spends much of his time alone in the forest. This continues until the next *kusiut* dance season when the coming to him of a *[illegible]* (II, p. 6) frees him from restraint, since the one supernatural power drives out the other. If the shaman himself is unwilling to have a *[illegible]*, it is sufficient if one comes to a son, or other near relative.

A shaman who has been told by his supernatural visitor to use a basin instructs a carpenter to make one for him. The design depends either on the owner's wish, or on that of his benefactor if the latter has decreed specifically.

1: McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948
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The Curing of the Sick

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When a person is ill one of his relatives comes to request a shaman to cure him.

"I will help the mortal," answers the shaman, as though he were himself a supernatural being.

Indeed he considers himself to be removed from the ranks of ordinary mortals, and refers to the being from whom he has received his power as "comrade." No mention of recompense is made, but the shaman understands that if he succeeds he will be rewarded. Donning his collar of alternate rows of dyed and undyed cedar-bark, he proceeds to the patient's house, usually followed by some of the singers, as well as by anyone else who is interested. He throws himself down beside, or on, the sick person and begins to feel for the sickness. Particularly in the case of stomach or chest trouble this is a difficult matter. The practitioner kneads the flesh, pounds the patient, leaps on him, and pummels him until a spectator wonders that the sufferer survives. The aim throughout is to bring the disease, pictured as a foreign object having material form, towards the surface whence it can be extracted in one of the following ways. [753]

(1) Some shamans of long ago were the possessors of life-sticks, and could cure merely by touching the patient with the life-giving end.

(2) In a simple illness the shaman is able to cure by his power alone. After locating the seat of the disease he casts himself on the patient, with head pressed close to the spot where he has located the trouble, and growls and grunts with half-closed lips, ejecting a flow of saliva over the sick person. By so doing he inserts his own power into the sufferer, who at once begins to imitate the chattering and to shake his hands. Then the shaman proceeds to recall this power to himself by scooping it up with half-cupped hands. Endowed as he is, the sickness is harmless to him. No instance is known of a shaman having failed to recall his power, but, theoretically, if he did

755 not do so, he would cease to be a shaman, and the ability would
pass to the cured person.

756 (3) In more difficult cases the shaman uses his basin and
seeks assistance from others by a frenzied beating of sticks.
He sends some young man out to fill the receptacle at the river,
sets it near the patient, and throws water over him as he kneads
in the manner already described. While this is going on, and
535 it is often a lengthy performance, another shaman, or someone
535 accustomed to lead the singers, ranges the bystanders into two
755 rows, facing each other between the door and the central fire.
Each is provided with a beating stick such as the singers use,
and a sounding-board is placed before each row. The clever
dancer who has been commissioned to lead the orchestra of
stick-beaters stands near the door and the musicians take their
time from his movements. First he slowly raises both arms
and all beat time softly, then, as he lifts his arms higher, the
noise increases, and he sways from side to side as if carried
away by the music; as he does so the men towards whom he
leans intensify their beating, while those on the other side
decrease. Back and forth he sways followed by the beating;
nearing the climax he treads mincingly, whereat the noise rises
to thunder-pitch, then jumps twice, and as he strikes the
ground the drums beat and all the sticks come down with a
final ear-splitting crash. Throughout the whole the women
drone *i*............. This elaborate beating of time is repeated
four times, on each occasion concluding with the double jump
which calls forth the double thunder of drums and sticks.

755 Meanwhile the functioning shaman is gurgling and chat-
756 tering through half-closed lips, and at intervals the leader, or
any stick-beater, shouts *haip*, a call which is supposed to
soothe the supernatural beings. The din is tremendous. No
explanation could be found of the meaning of this noise.

"It has always been done," say the Bella Coola, and they theorize no further.

At last the shaman rises from the sick person, holding his hands carefully cupped together as if he held something within

them that might escape. It is the sickness! The din increases; 755
the leader works himself into a frenzy with his rapid gyrations, 756 *
then he stills the noise as the shaman goes to the door. In [535]
dead silence, the more striking in contrast to the previous
tumult, he partly opens his hands and puffs against them, as if blowing something out of the door, at the same time calling out, *hoip*. Again the beating of sticks breaks out, again it is stilled, and again the shaman blows forth the sickness. This is done four times. The shaman uses his own discretion whether to send the sickness through the door or the smoke-vent.

A variant of this method is for the functioning shaman to
dance during the beating of sticks, before throwing himself on [535]
the patient. With chattering teeth and shaking rattle, he
revolves sunwise, his free arm bent at the elbow so that his wrist, which he shakes freely, is close to his chin; at intervals he calls out, *swusirwa*. It is a serious and important proceeding to the Bella Coola, and the effects are considered nullified if a dog barks during the stick-beating.

(4) Some powerful shamans cure by the use of dyed and [824]
undyed cedar-bark. A roll made of these two substances is
placed among glowing embers until it is itself afire, when the [535]
shaman puts it in his mouth. After dancing for some time to
the accompaniment of frenzied stick-beating, he hauls forth the bark, still burning, and again puts it in the fire. This is done four times. Then he thrusts the burning bark into the patient's mouth, and leaves it there for some time before pulling it forth. This, too, is repeated four times. When finally drawn forth, it has attracted the sickness, which can then be thrown away by the throwing away of the bark. It seems clear that this must be done by conjuring, but the writer was unable to learn the method employed, and was repeatedly assured that no subterfuge was used.

(5) One illness is caused by a person carelessly stepping on [753]
a dead salmon, such as dot the banks of the rivers in the [825]
autumn. The fish, indignant, injects a sickness into the
offender;

755 offender. A shaman is able to diagnose the malady, and when 756 he has pulled it forth in the manner previously described, he [825] ties it up in a bundle of four pieces of dyed, and four of undyed, cedar-bark, sprinkles eagle down over the whole, and throws it into the river. This not only causes the sickness to return whence it has come, but placates the salmon who are glad to receive the beautiful cedar-bark.

755 756 782 (8) Another method is by making a present to *Tlitcäplilän·a*. The shaman prepares four collars of hemlock twigs, wrapped around with alternate bands of dyed and undyed cedar-bark, and with numerous cross-pieces of dyed cedar-bark. When these are ready, all assemble to witness the curing, and to assist the practitioner by beating sticks. He first sets four basins, one at each corner of the fire, and then proceeds to pull it apart, leaving a glowing expanse of embers in the centre. The shaman throws on this bed pieces of dyed and undyed cedar-bark, as well as eagle down, and [789] walks through, between the two halves of the separated fire. Several men stated that they had seen this done, but none could give any information as to the method. If actually carried out, the way in which the fire was prevented from burning the shaman and the highly inflammable bark and eagle down has been lost.

The shaman himself now guides the beating of sticks. When the tumult has reached its height he goes to the patient and places over his head one of the collars, passing it right down over his body, breaking the cross strings of dyed cedar-bark as he does so. The patient rises and the shaman picks up the collar from beneath his feet; his body has thus passed entirely through it. The sick man then revolves once, sunwise, while the shaman carries the collar once, sunwise, around the fire. He then stills the beating of sticks, which has been going on throughout, and casts the circlet on the fire. The same procedure is repeated with the three remaining collars. It is believed that these offerings reach *Tlitcäplilän·a* who, pleased to receive such paltry objects, restores the sick, though she does not herself come to do so.

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The shaman now sends a young man out to fill his curing basin. When this is done, he carries it around the fire, once, sunwise, and sets it down beside the patient. The practitioner drinks from it, and casts some eagle down on the surface. If it revolves sunwise, it signifies that the patient will soon recover, and the shaman proceeds to wash him with the water; if it remains stationary or revolves in the opposite direction, it is an unfavourable sign, and he throws the water out of the door. More is then brought, and the procedure repeated until it revolves sunwise. Although no Bella Coola can state definitely how this is performed, the consensus of opinion is that it is done by twisting the box slightly.

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Shamans are not the only ones who make offerings to *Tlitcaplitana*. It is generally known that she likes to receive things, so a sick person often throws on the fire a little grease, some of his own clothing, or other objects of small value. By so doing he hopes that she may appear, or that the sickness will vanish as the object is consumed in the flames. A person in good health sometimes makes like offerings, either on the central house fire or on one built behind the house, at the same time asking *Tlitcaplitana* to help guard him.

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(v) In recent years some shamans have been in the habit of displaying the sickness in visible form; this is said to have been a practice adopted from the Bella Bella. After throwing himself on top of the patient the shaman sucks violently, and produces such an object as a toad, a snail, or a stick of wood, which he claims to have been the cause of the malady. This has, of course, been concealed throughout in his mouth. This belief is fostered by the undoubted skill of some shamans in extracting such foreign substances as a salmon bone, wedged in a patient's throat, or a sliver. In such cases he first works with his fingers to force the object near the surface. It is believed that some shamans are so powerful they can draw forth foreign substances by the mere application of their stick

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[illegible] McIlwraith, T. F. (1899–1964) [illegible]

[illegible]

755 to the part affected. In such a case the object, a toad for
* 756 example, becomes visible at the end of the staff. Conjuring is employed to do this, and often a tuft of dyed cedar-bark is used, which makes the deception still easier. Shamans are very expert in such matters. It is said that when two rival shamans once disputed about their prowess, one of them cast his stick on the ground and it became a snake, whereupon the other did likewise; and his became a toad which hopped after
[779] the snake. The Bella Coola find biblical parallels for such exhibitions of power in the transformation of Aaron's rod, and the appearance of fire on Mount Carmel.

Shamanistic Ceremonies

554 In addition to his professional abilities, a shaman has also
* [illegible] certain social prerogatives. As has been mentioned, many
756 shamans lack the power to cure, but they may have seen some
789 feat during a dream, or during a visitation from *Tlitcaplitäna*. It enhances a man's social prestige if he can graphically display whatever he has observed. It follows that the rites about to be described are often, perhaps usually, performed by a person unable to cure the sick, but it must be remembered that to the Bella Coola there is no social difference between a shaman who can cure with the aid of a basin, and one who lacks this power. Each has merely received a different gift from his supernatural benefactor. There seems little doubt that a man of imagina-
* 756 tive temperament frequently invents a feat of this type, or
789 rather that he ponders over one until he either dreams of it, or imagines himself to have done so. Certainly, after he has performed such a rite, he deludes himself into believing that he has had supernatural authorization for it. Conjuring feats performed long ago by shamans, feats practised by the members of other tribes, personal inventions, either actually or theoretically dreamed of, all these are among the sources from which shamanistic dances are derived. It follows that almost
* 756 anyone who has the necessary skill is able to perform, provided
556 that he has sufficient food to validate the ceremony. Thus this

type of dance differs from all other Bella Coola ones, since no inherited prerogative is required. Years ago such exhibitions were common, although curing shamans were rare. 756 556

The usual time for a shaman's performance is at the conclusion of the *kusiut* season, though one is sometimes held prior to that period if the would-be performer fears that the food which he has stored up for the event is likely to be frozen. [776]

When he decides to give a dance, the shaman first summons the singers to his house and teaches them a song of his own composition. Theoretically both text and tune should have been received from his supernatural benefactor, but many performers undoubtedly employ songs used by shaman ancestors which they have chanced to remember. Another device is to describe a supernatural being seen in a dream. In some cases there is deliberate deception, but in most the performer persuades himself that he has received supernatural authorization. The texts are full of obscure allusions, a river, for example, is spoken of as swift running water. Often a man will treasure a song for years, before collecting the wealth necessary to use it publicly, with the social prestige attached. A shaman always obtains a name from his supernatural benefactor, but if a man merely sees a face observed in a dream, this is impossible, so he adopts the designation of some deceased shaman, even convincing himself that it was uttered by the apparition. Others will probably remember this name, hence suspicions may easily be aroused concerning the authenticity of the performance, but it is not customary to voice these. The singers repeat the song which they have just heard, and continue doing so until they have mastered it. Sometimes they compose further songs themselves for the performer. During the practising, those who are not *kukusiut* are expelled from the house. A shaman is a person who has come in contact with the supernatural; hence he is akin to the members of the society who, therefore, support him during his rite.* A herald is sent out 533 756 536 [185] [553] [184] 756 556 [575] [203]

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*Theoretically, a shaman need not be a *kusiut*, but visitations usually come only to those of religious and imaginative temperaments, who are in the majority of cases already members of the society.

to make known to all that there will be a dance on the following day, using the name of the shaman. After such announcement, it would be most unusual for anyone to think of leaving a village until after the performance.

Towards dusk on the appointed day the people are summoned to the house of the shaman. Near the door are seated those who are not initiated *kukusiut*; in the inner part of the house are members of the society, with the singers in their accustomed places behind the fire. The shaman stands alone between the fire and the door and sings one of his songs, the time being marked by the words alone. Then he dances, his wrists shaking, his head rolling from side to side, and his feet marking time to the beating of sticks, as the singers accompany the singing of his song. If more than one song has been composed he dances to each, always accompanied by other shamans and by them alone. The shaman's costume consists of the usual blanket, and eagle down is scattered in his hair, with the additional and distinctive mark of intertwined dyed, and undyed, cedar-bark. After every song, the singers beat time very rapidly,* too rapidly for the dancer to keep pace with it, as he merely sways backwards and forwards shaking his hands violently. Then the shaman, assisted by a few friends whom he has chosen for the purpose, performs a conjuring feat to impress the uninitiated. The *kukusiut* realize that this may be merely a deception, but since real shamans perform something of the same nature, there is always the possibility that it may be genuine. The shaman may choose some feat which he has seen some old shaman perform; or he may use something which he has seen in a dream; or rely purely on his own inventive ability, aided, as he always is, by carpenters. The method of carrying out each trick is carefully guarded, with the result that it was impossible to obtain information about more than a few. After the conjuring act, the shaman gives food to all, followed by presents. If it is the first time that he has given

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*This fast beating of time is called *[illegible]*; it occurs only in shaman and *[illegible]* dances.

such a ceremony, that is, if he is validating his name, the gifts 756 *
must be valuable. On later occasions, irrespective of whether 556
it is the same trick or another that is performed, the presents will be of small value. Goods so given are not returnable. After dancing, a shaman wears his collar of dyed and undyed [792]
cedar-bark all summer, in fact until he rids himself of his supernatural endowment by the performance of a *kusiut* rite the following winter.

Thus there is close inter-dependence of shaman and *kusiut* [575]
dances. On any later occasion, at a ceremony when songs of all types are being sung, if the singers beat out the tunes of [534]
those used at the ritual just described, the shaman dances to [533]
them. This is said to "cure" him, as if the power within him was a source of danger.

The following are examples of the conjuring tricks per- 756 *
formed, most of them done by the shaman *Ninitsamlais*, a 789
relation of an informant, who was able to learn the methods employed.

On one occasion *Ninitsamlais* prepared two boxes, apparently the ordinary wooden sort used for cooking; across each he arranged a diagonal cross-piece so that the receptacle contained two watertight compartments. Previous to the performance, *Ninitsamlais* poured water, dyed red with the bark of the alder, into one section of one of the boxes, and put eagle down in one of the compartments of the other. When the time came to carry out the rite he asked an accomplice, another shaman, to bring some water and pour it into his box. This was done, the assistant taking care to put it into the empty half, not into that which contained the dyed water. *Ninitsamlais* shook the box and poured out some of the liquid to prove that it really was water, and then drank. The spectators, unaware of the cross-piece, did not notice that he did so from the corner opposite to that from which he had poured the water. He had, of course, drunk the dyed fluid. *Ninitsamlais* cried out that what he had swallowed was paining him, and proceeded to vomit the red water, much to the surprise of the

* 756 761 uninitiated, who readily believed his claim that what he had drunk had changed to blood. Again the performer asked his assistant to bring in some water which he poured into the empty section of the other box, of which the other half contained eagle down. *Nimitsamlais* moved to and fro, shaking the box to spill some of the liquid, and then announced that there was so much he could not drink it all, but would pour some on the fire. As before, he tilted the opposite side of the box, so that, instead of water, the eagle down came floating forth. The uninitiated, firmly convinced that the performer was endowed with supernatural power, never suspected that they were being deceived.

For her performance a female shaman once split a long, green stick, and gouged out the centre, so that it formed a narrow tube-like receptacle in which she laid a piece of undyed cedar-bark covered with eagle down. With wooden pegs she fastened the stick together so that it appeared to be an ordinary branch. When ready to perform, the woman asked some people to pile more wood on the fire, and, among others, an accomplice threw on the prepared stick with its butt protruding at the edge of the flames. As the fire blazed fiercely the female shaman danced; then the assistant announced that she wished to draw something from the flames, whereupon the woman seized the end of the cedar-bark from its enclosure in the projecting butt of the stick, and drew it forth. The uninitiated, ignorant of the prepared stick, were greatly impressed and puzzled as to how such inflammable material could have been in a fire without being consumed.

Nimitsamlais used his skill as a carpenter to carry out elaborate tricks. On one occasion he sawed the boards surrounding the smoke vent of his house, and fixed them with skin hinges so that they could be raised by ropes from outside the building. To show his supernatural power he threw several large baskets up towards the roof. As he did so his assistants outside pulled the ropes so that the opening was enlarged and allowed the baskets to pass through. In the gloom of the house

[illegible]

[illegible]

the spectators could not see the manner in which the hole was increased in size. It had been too small to permit the passage of the feathers at the time they were thrown, and it was still the same size after the feat was accomplished; hence supernatural means must have been employed to force them through the roof. Thus ran the logic of the uninitiated.

An informant, when acting as a [illegible] spy (III, p. [illegible]), once assisted the accomplices of a shaman who had obtained a stone from one of the lakes above [illegible]. Many landslides fall into this, bringing down stones which are full of holes and float in water. Unless closely examined, the riddling is not evident, so that an ordinary river stone of the same size and colour can easily be confused with it.

Previous to dancing, the shaman had placed a few embers in the recesses of his stone, covered them with pounded cedar-bark, and concealed the object near the fire. When all was ready, he asked the informant, whom the uninitiated did not know to be an accomplice, to fetch him a stone. This he did, bringing one previously chosen as closely resembling the prepared one from the lake. This ordinary stone was passed around among the spectators and then given to the shaman who, unobserved, palmed it off for the other as he began to dance. At intervals he blew on the stone until the embers ignited the dry bark; first smoke appeared, then sparks, and finally a mass of flame. The shaman dropped it as if it had become too hot, choosing the spot where lay the river pebble; and again passed the latter from hand to hand through the audience, who could not understand how flames had been made to appear from an ordinary river stone. The words used for the songs on this occasion did not refer to the feat about to be performed, but to the alleged power given to the performer by *[illegible]*.

On another occasion a woman who was a shaman produced an eagle's tail and said that she could make it revolve in a bucket of water, following her steps. She hid the tail, while appearing to cast it into the water, and by means of a con-

776 784 central cord succeeded in drawing feathers, previously placed on the surface, around in the direction in which she was dancing. It was impossible to learn the details of the method employed in this trick. The subterfuge was long ago practised by a shaman.

A simple but effective trick was the substitution of a baton made of light maple wood for one of the heavy type used by the singers. The real stick had been passed around the audience and apparently returned to one of the singers, though in reality the false one had been given to him. As he beat time the hollow sound that occurred was a source of surprise to the uninitiated spectators, nor was their wonder lessened when a real baton was again handed around, as if it were the one that had been in use.

[778] According to an informant, the last time that a supernatural being helped the person on whom it had conferred shamanistic power to perform a rite of this kind was about 1870. A man who had fallen from his canoe into the ocean was rescued, but for a long time was ill as a result of exposure. [776] [787] River Measurer, the supernatural being who governs the height of tides in the river, appeared and made him a shaman with the ability to cure through the use of a wash-basin. As this shaman danced, he had a large box filled with water. Presently he called on one of the uninitiated to examine the height of the water and point out to his fellows how high it was. A little later he called a second man who likewise indicated on the outside of the box the height of the liquid within. It had fallen, though its disappearance seemed inexplicable.

781 789 The above furnishes a good example of the attitude of the uninitiated. The informant, a very intelligent Bella Coola, gave a number of instances of the conjuring methods employed, some of which he had helped to carry out. Unquestionably, this was of the same nature, yet, because he was deceived at the time of its performance, he readily believed that the rite was supernatural; since then he had never thought of doubting

it. The uninitiated are so steeped in the atmosphere of belief that any simple conjuring trick is sufficient to delude them. 781 789

Finally, the following account is here inserted, though the details of the performance could not be learnt.

The father of an elderly Bella Coola was once so sick that no one could help him. He had coughed up blood, eagle down had been heaped on his body, and hope had been abandoned. Then a [illegible] came to him, restoring his health and making him a very powerful shaman. The supernatural visitor had told him to employ his power beneficially, and had further instructed him in the use of a rod wherein it lay. Whenever this man danced, a stick, decorated with bands of cedar bark wound spirally, was hung horizontally from the roof of his house. He carried one similarly embellished, but smaller, about two and a half feet long and three inches in diameter, having at one end a tuft of bark. During his dance, in which he sang of [illegible], he went under the suspended stick, held the small one in his hand, blew on one end of it, then threw it up so that it struck the large hanging one. This was presumably done by the tuft of bark folding over and catching in some way. Again he danced and, when underneath where the two sticks were suspended, he jumped up, and caught the lower end of the smaller with his hands. This supported his weight, and he swung back and forth on it until he voluntarily released his grip and dropped. When next he danced at the same spot he held out one hand with palm uppermost beneath the smaller stick; the other was held in front of his mouth pointing towards the suspended one. He blew on the latter as if blowing dust from his hand to the point of contact of the two sticks, and the smaller dropped into his outstretched hand. 756* 789

By means of this stick the shaman could cure diseases. When told in what part of the body the pain was situated he pressed on that part with one end of his stick. Then he carried it to the fire and held in the smoke the end that had been in contact with the sickness. He puffed twice at it with his 755 756*

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755 mouth, and the malady departed. It had been absorbed into the stick, and later driven from it by the shaman's breath.

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789 This man made a great reputation for himself with his ability to hang from his small stick. On one occasion, after fishing on the lower Fraser River, he was encamped on the ocean beach near Seattle, where he had gone to pick hops. Four white men who had heard of his powers came to his tent for a demonstration. He put on his robes, took his small stick from his box, and used the ridge pole of his tent as the heavier horizontal one. The white men examined the small stick and found nothing peculiar about it. The man performed his dance, in the course of it throwing the small stick up against the ridge pole, where it remained suspended with the actor hanging from it. After releasing his hold, he struck the smaller stick a slight blow with his hand and it at once came away from the ridge pole.

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787 As already mentioned, it is extremely difficult to obtain accounts of dreams which have served as sources for shamanistic performances. They are unconsciously embellished by the performer to such an extent that the ritual displayed has probably slight resemblance to the vision on which it is based.

The following, however, is an example of the type that could have served as theme. A man once dreamed that he saw Mount *Nusqalst* with its rocks adorned with handsome pictures. The other mountains of the valley were also decorated, but none of them was so fine. If he had had the desire and the necessary wealth he could have arranged with the carpenters to have the designs that he saw in his dream painted, and could have displayed them as a shaman's vision.

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782 A shaman, particularly one who has received a vision from *Tlitcaplitān-a*, and who has had marked success both in curing the sick and in giving conjuring exhibitions, is considered to be in peculiarly close association with supernatural beings. Accordingly, he is regarded as a fit person to ask their assistance, not that he has any means of gaining help that are not open to others, but merely that his greater acquaintance with

them renders it more likely that they will grant his requests. Therefore, a shaman is usually called upon to perform the following rites: 756* 782

(1) Washing the mouth of a person who has died without voiding from his body the first salmon or olachen of the season (I, p. [illegible]). [764]

(2) Asking assistance for the complicated rites of the potlatch (I, p. [illegible]). [556]

(3) Request for assistance before starting on a journey, by puffing eagle down into the air (I, p. [illegible]). [184]

(4) Request for aid by means of placing food on the water and blowing eagle down into the air at [illegible] Nose and Kwatna (I, p. [illegible]).

In fact a supplication to any supernatural being can be made with greater prospect of success by a shaman than by any other person.

The Power of Shamans

As has been said, a shaman actually has power within himself, and this is so strong that it may be a source of danger to others. If a man should pass behind one so endowed when the latter is eating, his spirit would be drawn from his body into the shaman's mouth, which would close with a click, crushing the spirit and killing the man. This is quite involuntary on the part of the shaman. It happened more than once among the early inhabitants, and since that time people have been very careful not to pass behind an eating shaman; this taboo was still in force until about 1885. A shaman, too, is said to be able to recall a spirit which has left its body, and thus caused illness. It is believed by some that shamans can see the position of a person's tally post, and so judge the length of his life. These examples show the varying beliefs of different Bella Coola concerning the powers of shamans. 756* [761] [264] [178] [755]

But the force within the shaman is really more dangerous to its possessor than to others. As certain "unclean" objects are able to subdue supernatural beings, so do these same ob- 756* 783 841

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ters have power over shamans. A shaman must never sleep beside his wife during her menses, must never eat food prepared by a menstruating woman, by one who has recently washed a new-born infant, by a girl during the period of seclusion following puberty, or by a widow or widower during the year that follows the death of his partner. If a shaman's nose bleeds when he is dancing it is because a menstruating woman is present in the house; he at once asks the offender to withdraw, after which the bleeding stops. Moreover, he must [755] never cure a woman during her periods. A wise shaman prac- [785] tises ceremonial chastity frequently. In view of the lack of cleanliness ascribed to menstrual blood, it is perhaps surprising that a woman can become a shaman while still of child-bearing age. This is rare, and only occurs when a woman is the last survivor of a family. The Bella Coola themselves consider it to be peculiar, only explicable on the ground that anything is possible to the supernatural beings, even the disregarding of feminine "uncleanness." Usually, female shamans are past the age of child-bearing; if not, they observe absolute chastity.

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Even inadvertent breaking of one of these rules causes death. This is not regarded as a punishment inflicted by *Tlitcaplitana*; it is merely the inevitable consequence of the supernatural power within the shaman having come in contact with what is not clean. As a shaman is considered to be immune against all ordinary ailments, his death is always attributed to the breaking of a taboo. Frequently the death of a shaman is accompanied by some convulsion of nature. One female shaman, for example, told the people of her village to keep their children within doors, since a supernatural being was coming for her. Soon it became dark; there were four loud claps of thunder, at the fourth of which she fell dead.

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The following was related as an instance of the danger to a shaman of coming in contact with an unclean woman.

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The son of the first man to come to earth at *Nuliwa* was, like his father, named *Dadacong*. One April he and his wife went upstream to *Xwamta*, a place in the country of the Carriers where milk-weed is plen-

cine, of which they planned to collect a supply. In the course of their journey *[illegible]* saw a man who, when he drew near, turned into a piece of hanging moss. A little later he again saw a figure, but on approaching it became a tree. *[illegible]* and his wife walked on and presently the former once more beheld a man; this time the apparition changed to a fir tree. It was evident to *[illegible]* that a supernatural being had manifested itself to him, and he told his wife that they must return. On reaching home he related his experience and gave a shaman's dance.

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From this experience he had received the power of curing. He could see disease when it was invisible to all others, and could summon it to himself, where it was harmless, thus restoring the patient to health. He made for himself a rattle, shaped like a bird; this had the ability of dancing of its own accord, and would catch people's hair in its opening and closing beak. The sick were brought to *[illegible]* from all over the valley. One day he travelled by canoe down to *[illegible]* where he found many of the villagers seriously ill. His arrival was quite fortuitous, for he was unaware of the epidemic that was raging. The inhabitants sought his help, so he healed and cured them. He entered the house of a woman who claimed to be ill, and took the sickness upon himself, but no sooner had he left than he fell down stricken. He demanded to be taken home in his canoe, but he only lived two days after his return. The woman had been in pain from her menses; it was this that he had taken upon himself and caused his death.

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In consequence of the danger attached to the vocation, many people try to avoid becoming shamans, though if *Thlnápilāx a* should appear to a man when ill, he cannot escape the power. The usual method of prevention is for a man to hold intercourse with his wife from below, so that her flesh, impure through its liability to menses, can form a barrier to the coming of supernatural power. One who wishes to escape always sleeps on the left of his wife, whereas if he is seeking shaman's power he sleeps on the right. Another method of avoidance is to use the hole in the floor which serves as exit and entrance to the house of a girl secluded following adolescence.

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Since the power of a shaman is obtained by a personal experience, and lacks both form and substance, it cannot be transmitted and disappears at the owner's death. As has been

* 156 cerned, there is a tendency for such ability to be granted to the descendants of shamans, but this is not necessarily the case. A shaman can instruct his child and so increase the latter's chances of a vision, but the parent can do no more. A single exception to this concept was noted but the following incident was regarded as absolutely inexplicable, a thing beyond experience or comprehension.

* 156 197 A certain Kimsquit shaman had the supernatural being from whom he had derived his power actually resident in his body. At the time he obtained the gift, his benefactor had spoken to him.

"Henceforth," it said, "I will live in your right arm, my head located near your wrist, my tail near your elbow. When you cure a sick person place your arm against whatever part of his body is affected and I will draw forth the sickness with my mouth."

Thanks to this assistance, the shaman was able to perform marvellous cures, as the being never failed to suck out the disease. Though aware of his supernatural guest, the shaman himself never saw it except when he summoned it to cure a patient; then it came forth from his arm, though no one else could see it. When he had blown away the sickness, in the usual manner of shamans, the supernatural one returned within his arm, out of sight.

When the shaman grew old he called a friend to him and asked him to receive his power, telling him where, and how, it was localized. The man consented. The shaman then began [198] to talk in the language of supernatural beings, as shamans often do, and presently the supernatural one came forth and became visible to the friend as a small lizard-like creature sitting on the palm of the shaman's hand. This frightened the friend and he declined the creature on the ground that he lacked ceremonial purity, hence his body was not a fitting receptacle. The shaman urged him to receive the creature, but when he continued to refuse, allowed it to return to his own arm. When the shaman died a few years later the friend bitterly regretted his own cowardice, for the wonderful cures stopped, whereas, had he accepted the supernatural guest, he would have been able to perform them. 756* 787

SHAMANS FROM THE DEAD

There remain to be described shamans from the dead, whose abilities and prerogatives are almost identical with those already described. They obtain their power either from the visitation of a ghost in this world, or by a journey to the land of shades below. The following incident explains why shamans alone can hold converse with ghosts. 756* 775 787.

> Once, long ago, the lover of a young girl died. She was so heart-broken that in her agony, four days after his burial, she lay down on his grave to weep. The dead man was able to visit her and in due time she gave birth to a child, who, like its father, was a ghost, with drawn face and glaring eyes. The perturbed woman tended it in the forest, her love overcoming a feeling of repulsion, and when she returned to her home she endeavoured to prevent her own mother handling the infant, knowing that she would be horrified. The grandmother insisted, but as soon as she saw the ghastly appearance of the child she dropped it in horror, and the infant vanished. [539]

Since then there has been a barrier, resembling a wall of smoke, between mortals and the dead. If the old woman had not dropped her grandchild, the living would still be able to converse with their deceased friends and relatives.

Nowadays, shamans alone are able to lift the barrier and discourse with the ghosts of those who have departed. These are quite common visitors to the land of the living, but only a shaman can understand their languages, of which one is a series of whistles, and the other resembles the attempts at speech made by a tongueless individual. Shamans can learn what the dead require and so transmit the knowledge to the relatives of the deceased. As, long ago, shamans whose powers were derived from animals were able to teach mortals the proper methods of hunting, and the taboos enjoined, so a [198]

956 775 787 shaman from the dead once visited the land of ghosts and learnt their needs. They informed him that food and clothing thrown on the ground did not reach them, and that in order to do so it must be cast on the fire. Instead of journeying to the land of the dead some shamans receive their powers from ghosts who ascend to this earth, as the following account describes.

534 956 775 787 [828] [755] Within the lifetime of an elderly Bella Coola informant, a certain woman, *Sikwalxwisla* by name, left her house one evening for a few minutes. When she came back she was crazy. Her face was green, her mouth and face distorted and twisted, she could only whistle when she tried to talk, and kept endeavouring to walk on her hands. Taking her blankets, she went through the motions of washing them, but instead of using water, she dragged them to and fro through the ashes of the central fire, until, utterly exhausted, she lay down. By these symptoms it was recognized that a ghost had stricken her with madness, and several shamans of the dead were called upon for help. For a long time their efforts were fruitless. Then one of them obtained some stained menstrual pads. While another conducted the frantic beating of sticks, the leading practitioner waved one of the pads through the smoke of the central fire and laid it, with hemlock bark and dyed cedar-bark, on the patient's face. After leaving it there a few moments, he took it off and, while the beating of sticks was stilled, threw it out the door. When this had been done four times the woman was restored to sanity. Later on she said she had seen the ghost of a certain *Tsiswatl*, a man recently deceased. Emerging from her trance she found herself in her house surrounded by numerous people and the shaman working over her. If he had not been able to cure her, she would have died; in fact, it was impossible to discover whether the Bella Coola regarded this woman as having been cured of an illness, or as having been restored from the dead.

Sikwalxwisla called for the singers to whom she sang four songs, relating what she had seen. They described how she stood by a fire in the land below, where the sun travelled from west to east, and where everything differed from this earth, though reminiscent of it. The singers learnt the songs, and it was to their music that the woman danced on later occasions. She was able ever afterwards not only to cure maladies caused by ghosts but to talk with them. For this purpose she was in the habit of lying down at night in the graveyard, looking down into the land of the dead which was open to her, and conversing with the inhabitants in a strange whistling language which the living could hear, but could not understand. She was also able to gaze downwards at the edge of the central fire nearest to the door. 756* 775

Ånotäbäkmots, an old shaman from the dead who died not long ago, obtained his power by chancing to visit their land. [787 539] The themes of his songs were of the land of the dead where, he said, there were many people; where those who had been rich on earth were rich, but where those who had been poor were still poor; where those who had been blind could see, and those who had been maimed were whole. He told of *P'äluätl*, a legless creature who lives in the land below, but can travel with amazing speed. [776] In fact this shaman stated that it was he who was sent when the ghosts wished to communicate with the living, a statement contradicted by others. He told further of *Kaswikudjän a*, a supernatural woman resident there, who is able to pick berries with phenomenal rapidity. [776] But this talent avails her little, since her basket is full of the teeth of dead men who devour the fruit as fast as she picks them. It was *Ånotäbäkmots* who described how in the land below there were only two enormous trees of the kind known to the Bella Coola as *klp*, under the shade of which the ghosts played a game resembling football with huge, light balls.

A dead person usually chooses one of his own relatives as the proper person on whom to bestow the power of a shaman, but their actions in this respect can neither be coerced nor cajoled. Ceremonial chastity is of assistance, and power can usually be obtained by anyone who lies four days and four nights, face downwards, on a new grave. 756 775 787 Nor does every sight of a deceased person bring with it this faculty; in fact, ghosts are greatly dreaded since they usually cause harm to the beholder. On one occasion the mother of an elderly Bella Coola woman left the house one evening, to return shortly with her face screwed up into a ghastly smile, green in colour, and with saliva dribbling from her mouth. She was quite mad. A shaman from the dead succeeded in curing her, or it may have been in restoring her to life, and she was able to tell how she had seen what she took to be a man with face averted. She

756 called out to him, and then remembered no more. It was
775 obvious that she had seen a ghost.

[787] It is over diseases caused by ghosts that a shaman from the
dead has power. If a person picks up and eats any morsels
753 which he has dropped he will usually suffer, because, though
756 he thinks the crumbs have fallen, they have really been pulled
from his hands by a hungry ghost, who thus showed his desire
775 for food. By picking up and eating the *fragments*, the man
[264] thwarts a dead person who retaliates by *forcing* some sickness
into him. Ghosts may visit this land of the living and ask
their relatives for food or clothing, but mortals, unable to hear
the speech of the dead, are unaware of the requests of their
deceased relatives, and so do not answer them. The irritated
ghosts respond by causing sickness. In such cases a shaman
755 from the dead is able to suck out the cause of the ill, and some-
756 times to display it as a bone, twig, or other small object and
at the same time to tell the sufferer what it was that his rela-
tives desired. Like ordinary shamans, a shaman from the
dead uses his own discretion whether or not to employ the
violent beating of sticks, and like his fellow-practitioner re-
[465] ceives payment from those whom he has helped. There are no
fixed charges, but a successful shaman is always wealthy.

756 The intimate contact of ghosts with shamans has already
been mentioned in connection with the ability of the latter to
787 learn from the ghost of a murdered person whom he believes
694 to be his slayer.

There is one method of sacrificial curing practised by
755 shamans from the dead alone. If the sickness refuses to yield
756 to ordinary methods, the practitioner makes ten cedar-bark
782 vessels, fills these with grease and places them near the fire,
one between it and the door, one on the inner side, and four on
either side of it, parallel to the side walls of the house. By
each vessel are placed two small wooden figures, roughly carved
to represent men, and decorated with dyed and undyed cedar-
bark. *After* endeavouring to suck forth the disease, with or
without the assistance of the frenzied beating of sticks, the

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shaman pours the grease on the central fire, and throws on it 755
also the figures and some dried salmon. Thus propitiated, it 782
is believed that the dead will be more likely to allow the sickness to be sucked forth.

Shamans from the dead perform conjuring feats and 756 *
dramatic performances of the same type as ordinary shamans. 556
Until he gives his first dance a newly created shaman is known
as a *lua*, the same word that is used for a *kusiut* initiate, and [575]
during this period he wears the shaman's collar of intertwined dyed and undyed cedar-bark. If he is wealthy and influential, a shaman will repeat his dance every fourth year. Such a performance can be held at any season, although the usual time is [796]
after the *kusiut* ceremonies. The dramatic representations are of scenes witnessed in the land below, though sometimes they are done in a reverse manner, following the practice of the dead in doing things strangely. Thus one shaman reported that the ghosts wore very long blankets, but when he danced he wore one that came only to his hips. The method of singing is the same as that employed by ordinary shamans, but one whose [535]
power is derived from the dead dances with head bent downwards, his free hand pointing to the ground with first finger extended. Also his cry of "*swai, swai, swai*," uttered at intervals with a deep cadence, differs from that used by ordinary shamans. A dance always terminates with the distribution of food to validate the ceremony.

Like ordinary shamans, those from the dead cannot trans- 756 *
mit their power. At death their songs too are lost, unless they 589
choose to give them to a friend who is also a shaman from the [828]
dead. This is obviously contrary to the theoretical belief that all songs have been obtained during revelations, but is not at all contrary to the Bella Coola practice of having the singers assist the visionaries in "remembering" their visions.

The following tale, although drawn from the distant past, 536
is a typical illustration of one of the many ways in which 756 *
shamanistic power is received from the dead.[8] 775

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[8] A few stories of similar type have been included in vol. I, chap. VIII, to explain the life of the dead, and others are grouped together in the next chapter.

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948

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The Lads Who Visited the Home of the Dead

Long ago there was a Bella Coola man who had two sons. His wife died, and presently he remarried, becoming in time the father of an infant daughter. The second wife abused her step-sons, their father neglected them, and the two were poor and miserable, their best friend a faithful dog. When the people were invited to a feast, the lads were frequently overlooked as being of no importance, and their step-mother used to upbraid them for lacking the spirit to resent this insult. They could not answer, but merely bided their time. The two used to sleep on a raised platform behind the fire in hope of receiving supernatural assistance, and always left the house by a hole in the floor rather than through the door, thus observing one of the essentials for those who wish to obtain aid.

One day the two set out on an expedition into the mountains, carrying skin with which to make moccasins. As they were sitting at this work, the dog, which had followed its masters as usual, rushed off barking furiously. The brothers hurriedly finished the shoes and followed the animal in time to see it disappear into an opening after a porcupine. The elder leading, the two entered the cave which grew wider; on and on they went until finally they could see light in the distance. Guided by the barking of the dog ahead of them, they finally emerged into daylight, to find themselves in a new world, a land in which there was a large river and a sky resembling that above the earth, but different. The dog was waiting for them and had stopped barking.

The brothers set off up the river bank and presently saw on the other side a large town in which many people were moving about. The younger brother could see it plainly, but to the elder it was vague and indistinct. They called out to the people:

"Hi! Please send a canoe for us."

Though they called repeatedly, no one paid the slightest attention; the people seemed to be deaf, unaware of their presence. The two brothers remained all day opposite the village, calling out at intervals without result, and all the time becoming more hungry and disgusted. Towards dusk one of them yawned noisily. To their surprise there was a commotion in the town; the yawn had been heard although their cries had not. They could hear the people on the other side of the river discussing the noise.

"Let us send a canoe to fetch whoever may be over there" was the gist of their remarks.

Presently a canoe was poled out from the farther shore, and held in position by the ferrymen beneath the bank on which the brothers stood, necessitating a jump of two or three feet to reach it. As the elder prepared to leap into it, he glanced down and saw that the stones on the

river floor were visible through the canoe as if it had no bottom at all. 539
He drew back in fear. Though he knew it not, they had come to the 756*
land of the dead, where bottomless canoes and other phenomena were
to be expected. The younger brother, to whom the village had been 775
plainly visible, had no fear, but leapt down bravely, and was poled across to the farther shore, where he soon disappeared from his brother's sight among the throng of villagers.

The elder youth, left alone with the dog, sat down and wept, thinking that he had indeed lost his brother. After a time he continued his journey up the river-bank where presently he saw a bridge. He eagerly went over, intending to turn back towards the village where his brother had gone, but as soon as he had crossed he lost all thought of his original purpose and continued his journey upstream instead. Presently he heard the sound of adze strokes, and drew near, cautiously, until he could see the man who was using the tool.

"Why have you come here?" the woodcutter asked.

"Oh, for no special reason," the boy replied. "I should like to see your chief."

The woodcutter guided him to the house and when near called out, "The stranger wants to see our chief."

People came rushing out of the houses and the lad realized that he had come to the land of the wolves. His guide directed him to the chief's house which he entered through a doorway cut in a totem-pole. Within, the chief greeted him in a kindly fashion, saying:

"Please sit down for a little while until I can bring some friends to play with you."

He went outside, but presently returned and led him through the door to some moose-skins which he had spread on the ground under the totem-pole. Then he called the friends, who were four wolves. They came leaping out of the house and devoured the young man; but though his body was in four pieces inside the stomachs of the four animals, he was still conscious. After eating him, the beasts devoured the dog. Presently the wolves vomited into a dish, whereupon the chief re-formed what had been voided into a human being, and the lad was as before he had been eaten. Then the same was done to his dog.

The chief now beat once upon a drum as a signal for the people to adorn themselves for a dance; again he beat, and they assembled. Apparently all was ready, but the boy realized that the leader of the orchestra was absent. Again and again the chief beat on the drum, until at last the missing man drew near. He entered singing:

"A lad went out with his younger brother and his dog. A porcupine caused the mountains to open for him."

539 *756 775 As he sang, smoke could be seen rising from behind the house; the youth could see that it came from Porcupine's fire, but the song explained that it was eagle down for their mortal guest. The singer repeated his song; more smoke ascended from another place, which the lad saw was Mountain Goat's fire. The song was sung again and again, and at each repetition new smoke could be seen, from the fires of Deer, Black Bear, Whistler, Marten, Beaver, Wolverine, in fact from all animals except Grizzly Bear. The chief explained to his guest that whenever he wanted meat he could go hunting and would be able to see the smoke rising from the fires of various animals.[9]

"Tomorrow you will return home," he continued. "Your brothers (meaning the four wolves that had eaten him) will go with you to carry some presents."

Next morning [it was really a year later] the wolves tied up gifts of smoked meat in blankets woven of goat wool and sewn blankets of whistler, black bear, and marten. The meat, though a large quantity, was reduced to so small a compass that the four animals carried it without difficulty. The five travelled back to the spot where the two brothers had sat down to make their moccasins, and at that point the wolves returned to their home.

Now for the first time the lad remembered his brother, and began to weep bitterly, thinking that he must be dead. But presently he heard the sound of footsteps inside the cave through which the porcupine had guided him; they grew nearer, until the younger boy emerged. The elder was overjoyed, but his delight was turned to dismay when he saw that his brother's face was green and haggard, with a strange expression; that he had lost all the flesh from his body, and that his clothes, the same that he had worn when they parted company, were torn to tatters. His brother's appearance affected him so much that he fell down dead. The younger lad, however, had been made a shaman by the dead, so he quickly restored his brother. They exchanged experiences; the younger saying that the dead had given him the name *Kipδxs*. His appearance was vastly improved when he clad himself in a black bear blanket and two whistler cloaks brought by the other from the village of the wolves. The two returned home, entering the house secretly and lying down at once

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[825] [224] [9] To understand this the reader must remember the firm Bella Coola belief that all animals can assume different forms. To the ordinary person they appear as beasts, but in reality they lead lives resembling those of humans, having houses, fires, blankets, and other comforts. An individual who is able to see the smoke of their fires will have no difficulty in finding the homes of the animals and hence will have great success in hunting. The only one this lad was to avoid was Grizzly Bear, who was so fierce that pursuing him would be dangerous.

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on their old bed on the raised platform behind the fire. No one knew of their arrival.

Although neither the father nor the step-mother of the lads had shown them any affection when they were at home, as soon as they were lost both had been overwhelmed with grief. They lost all energy and, sunk in misery and self-recrimination, would sometimes lie for days on opposite sides of the house, not even keeping a fire alight. The other inhabitants of the village considered them beneath contempt, and often at night they would relieve themselves in the house of the sorrowing couple. The only person with any energy in the household was their daughter, now a child about five years old. On the day of her half-brothers' return she happened to throw some rubbish on the fire and, as it flared up, she saw long hair hanging down from the raised bed. She called out to her mother:

"Perhaps my brothers have come home. I see the hair hanging down."

But the mother answered: "Be quiet. Your brothers have been away for a year, we do not even know how they died."

The little girl was not satisfied. She threw more rubbish on the fire and again she saw the long pendant hair. When she told her mother the woman cried out angrily:

"Be quiet, you little liar!"

The two brothers had been listening to this dialogue, and the elder now took a mountain goat bladder filled with grease which he lowered so that it swung to and fro beneath the platform. When the little girl again threw rubbish on the fire her eye was attracted by the swinging object which she took and carried to her mother with the remark:

"My brothers must certainly have come home, see what they have brought."

Now the woman believed, and carried the bladder to her husband on the other side of the house, telling him the glad news. Together they went to the raised platform where the elder brother greeted them, but lied, saying:

"I am alone, I do not know what has happened to my younger brother."

In his delight at the return of one of his sons the father became sufficiently energetic to cut some firewood, such an unusual undertaking that some of his neighbours came to ascertain the meaning of it. He told them the news, which was passed around until the whole village knew, and all assembled in the house except those who, having polluted it, were now frightened to appear. The two brothers did not come down, and only the elder spoke to those gathered below. One malicious person tried

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to injure him by throwing on to the roof not far from his head a pad stained with menstrual blood, but *Kipdas*, by means of his magical power, knew that it was there, and whispered to his brother, who passed the information to his father, so that the old man was able to remove the pad before either of his sons was injured. The elder brother told the people where he had left large supplies of meat. This they brought in with great rejoicing the next day.

Although the two brothers remained constantly concealed, rumours began to circulate that the elder was not alone. After a time it became generally known that the supposition was correct, and that the younger brother had received a shaman's power from the dead. A malicious chief made the statement that he did not believe this and cast insinuations as to why a shaman should conceal himself. *Kipdas* used his power to inject sickness into the man and after a few days he died, though no one knew the cause.

Then the elder lad said, "My younger brother has told me that you should not bury the dead man too quickly. Let him try to restore him."

Some of the deceased's relatives were willing, others were not, but at last they agreed to give *Kipdas* an opportunity to show his skill, and he revived the dead man without any difficulty. In his gratitude the chief gave the restorer his daughter as a wife. Not long after, another chief expressed his disbelief and again the shaman caused him to become sick. This time the people at once appealed to *Kipdas* for help; this was refused, but when the man died he restored him, as he had done on the previous occasion. As before, he received a wife as a mark of gratitude. The reputation of *Kipdas* was now established; many dead persons were brought to him to be restored and through the presents given to him he was able to give potlatches. Nor did he forget his elder brother, but obtained wives for him too. Meanwhile the latter was having great success in hunting and brought in so much meat that he was able to give a potlatch at which his younger brother danced and was given a name.

One evening,[illegible] not long after this time, a little girl about six years old kept crying and crying; nothing would pacify her. The parents tried to soothe her but at last the mother said:

"Let's go away and leave her, the dead will take her."

So all in the household withdrew to the bedrooms, leaving the girl weeping beside the central fire. Presently her cries grew fainter, and the mother rushed out, but her daughter had vanished. The sobs were coming from beneath the ground, and they realized that it was indeed the dead who had taken the mother at her word and had seized the child. It sounded as if the girl were just beneath the surface of the ground, so the

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[illegible] *Cf.* a similar story (I, p. 503).

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people threw resinous sticks on the fire and followed to the graveyard, where the cries led them. They took sticks and dug furiously, but could not catch up to her, for the sobs grew fainter and fainter as the child was carried below.

In their despair the parents called *Ḱipdes*.

"All right," he replied, "I will try to bring her back. Please leave me alone in my house and I will invite the dead to a feast."

He collected all the vessels with urine in them from the village and gave one to each of a number of assistants whom he stationed around the walls of his house hidden beneath the roof. Then he invited the dead, who assembled with the exception of the woman who was taking care of the little girl. After repeated invitations she too came, and took her place on the chief's seat behind the fire, with the weeping child in her arms. *Ḱipdes* gave the signal and his assistants emptied the vessels. At once the dead people became impotent and sank as heaps of bones to the floor, leaving the little girl apparently unharmed. The parents picked her up eagerly and the bones were swept out to the graveyard.

The child kept crying out for salmon-berries, which were unprocurable, as it was winter. So the parents appealed again to *Ḱipdes*, who understood that what she wanted were snowberries, which are as salmon-berries to the dead, in whose land she must have eaten them. She would eat nothing else and, as they are not nutritious, she soon died, nor could she again be restored to life.

* A similar version omits any mention of a step-mother as the reason for the boys leaving home, and simply begins with their following the dog into a cleft of the mountains. The dead, after receiving the younger boy as in the preceding tale, try to make him eat "cranberries," which are in reality the eyes of corpses. Meanwhile, the older youth encounters the wolves, but in this case is given instructions about entering their house, whereby he escapes being eaten and is greeted cordially and granted a boon before leaving. This is the ability to gain a desire by merely wishing for it. It is by exercising this power that he meets his long-lost brother. In this account the younger boy's name received from the dead is *Ḳalyakdanat*, and Death, *Sa·lma*, gives him a stick with which to lift him from his position on the lid of a coffin. In the end *Sa·lma*, his patron, recalls the young shaman to himself. This version, which is the more abbreviated of the two, makes no allusion to the attempted rescue of a child from the land of ghosts.

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Direct Revelations from the Supreme God

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As has been noted, a shaman receives his power from one or other supernatural being, not from the supreme god, *Alquntäm*, himself. Yet instances are known to the Bella Coola of such benefactions, and to a visionary so endowed the term *sndyom* is applied. In every case a revelation of this type is considered to have taken place comparatively recently. In view of the manner in which biblical tales, introduced by Europeans, have spread from tribe to tribe in distorted form, it is not improbable that all such examples of the direct appearance of the supreme being can be traced to this source. Having heard from the white man of cases where the deity has appeared to men, the Indians would be only too ready and willing to accept and transmit such a tale, since it belongs to their general culture pattern. In the example here given, the instructions about dissemination of the knowledge imparted in the vision, as well as the claimed foreknowledge of European houses, strongly suggests a post-white man origin. Further, once the concept of the possible appearance of the supreme god is accepted—and no Bella Coola would question the accuracy of accounts heard from others—it would be a simple matter to attribute the powers of very strong shamans to this source. Accordingly, several typical shaman stories have been included in this section because it is claimed that the principal characters in each was a *sndyom*; it is highly probable, however, that if such a tale could have been collected when the whites first reached British Columbia, he would have appeared as nothing more than a shaman.

A *Sndyom*

A man whose home was on the lower Fraser was once cooking fish with hot stones in a box. To do this properly he needed four sets of heaters; when the food was nearly ready and he was dropping one of the fourth collection of stones into the box, the tongs, weakened by much hard usage, broke. The stone fell into the boiling water with a splash, severely burning the man, who, as it was salmon time, wore no clothing.

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Even in his pain he thought of the way in which human beings are less protected than beasts and this idea troubled him so much that he fainted. *Ālquntām* saw that the man was distressed and while he was still unconscious appeared to him, saying:

"I see you are worried about your lack of clothing. I have a message for you. Strange people, somewhat resembling yourselves, are approaching from the far east. They will help you out of your plight. You will find them cooking without the cumbersome boiling box; their houses will be warm and they will even have smooth coverings to their floors; there will be special places for sleeping and wonderful cooking-pots. Though all be warm in these houses, yet the fire will be invisible."

As a result of this vision the man became a *snäyem*. In the autumn he moved toward the coast and built for himself a house of special type with a raised sleeping platform in it, reached by a ladder.

Ālquntām had told him to transmit his message to other tribes, and for this purpose he travelled to the sites of Seattle, Comox, and Nanaimo, telling what he had heard in his trance. He further said that the newcomers would wear clothing, leaving only hands, feet, and faces exposed. This, too, he had learnt from the vision, also that the strangers would arrive during the generation of his hearers.

His fellow tribesmen used to eat large quantities of clams, which could be gathered only at the time of full-moon or new-moon, when the far-receding tide exposed a great expanse of clam-bed. The people decided to test his power by asking him if he could not gather the shell-fish at a time when the tide was medium and the beds covered. The visionary was on his platform in the upper part of his house, but without raising his head, he said:

"Yes, get ready; I will join you immediately."

He descended, passed through the doubting crowd which made way for him, and went to the ocean, with eyes tightly closed. Arrived at the water, he lowered his hand to feel it, then carefully put his foot under the surface, as if it were a mat. He advanced with short steps, going through the motions of one who rolls something back with his feet, and as he did so the water piled up as if it had been a mat, exposing the clam-bed. When he felt weeds under his feet he knew that the outer edge of the bed was reached and accordingly stopped, turned his back to the sea, which was now high as a wall, and held it back, without becoming wet. He called to his tribesmen who came and gathered the clams, though some looked doubtfully at the wall of water before them. When all who wished had done so, he ordered them to leave and returned towards the shore himself; the water following him, became normal and recovered its former area.

177 The details of this incident are sufficiently circumstantial
*756 to presuppose a distorted historical event. Moreover, many
*787 of the old people had heard of the incident, another indication of the accuracy of the tradition. As far as could be judged,
[539] news of the vision must have reached Bella Coola about the year 1800.[11] It is said that the *sndqom* sang the following song
[533] in a language unknown to any of his hearers: *Aqwimucu aqwimucu sisils axwamuc qwisiya.*[12] None of the older men appear to have any idea of the meaning of these words, or even of the language to which they belong.

No event has had such profound effect on the lives of the Indians of British Columbia as the coming of the white man. It would be surprising if, looking backwards, they did not feel that it had been foretold by prophets. The preceding story is the only Bella Coola example of such a belief, although tales of a similar kind are found widely throughout the province. In addition, there are a few traditions of prophecies fulfilled by the white man. One of these is that long, long ago, a shaman stated that in the future the dead would return with the ability to make fire by rubbing the end of a small twig along a rough surface, and that, soon after, all the Indians would die. The Bella Coola consider that matches are referred to in the first part of the statement, and read their own doom

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[174] [11] The approximate date was determined in the following manner: The most complete account of the event was obtained from a man fifty-six years old in 1924 who had heard the details from his mother. He was the youngest of a large family, so it is probable that his mother was about forty-five years of age when he was born. When a child of about ten, she had been told of the vision by a woman just passed the age of child-bearing, who had recently reached adolescence when news of the event reached Bella Coola. The figures can be arranged in tabular form.

Duration of the informant's life	56 years.
Interval between his birth and the time his mother heard the news	35 years.
Interval between transmission of the news to the informant's mother and its receipt in Bella Coola	35 years.
Total	126 years.

Allowing for exaggerations, this would make the correct date about 1800.

[126] [12] A phonograph record was made of this song for the National Museum of Canada. Recorded as song VII D 21b; singer, Jim Pollard.

in the second, as indicated by their diminished population. It is also said that about 1850, when a party of Bella Coola had camped for the night near Ocean Falls, one of the sleepers wakened his comrades by calling on them to look at the brilliant lights. No one then understood what he meant, but the meaning has become clear since the installation of electric lights in the town. 177 756* 787*

In addition to the preceding, a number of stories of the regular shaman type were collected, in which, however, the principal figure is said to have been a *snäxom*. They are included in this section for the reasons already mentioned. 539 756* 787*

A POTENTIAL *Snaxom*

The mother of an elderly Bella Coola used to receive direct communications from *Älquntäm* which gave her the necessary qualifications for a *snäxom*, though she did not wish to exercise her power. She was able to see over the whole earth, and to talk to sun, moon, and stars in a language which the other Bella Coola did not understand. She built a small house for herself in the woods where she usually slept alone; sometimes her husband joined her, but he was always afraid of the gigantic toads and other monsters that were her companions.

THE WOMAN WHO COULD CALL THUNDER

About one hundred years ago there was living in a village at the mouth of the Dean River, a man, *urwinsadla*, and his wife, *Snuqwaix*. He was a famous hunter who frequently observed ceremonial chastity and his wife claimed to be a shaman, but the inhabitants of the villages on both the Dean and Kimsquit rivers doubted this, as did also those living in the lower Bella Coola valley. *Snuqwaix* was so boastful and disagreeable that at last the chiefs held a meeting and went one day to her house, where they told her that if she failed to give a satisfactory demonstration of her powers she would be killed.[illegible] Some were ashamed to doubt her word, but the concensus of opinion was that she should prove her claims, so they all sat down in her house and waited. She looked around and selected one man, *Kwalhal*, without apparent reason, and told him that he was to

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[illegible] Such power on the part of chiefs is most unusual and, though it was related without comment by the narrator, should not be regarded as historically correct. [622]

539 summon Thunder for her. The spectators began to beat time while she
*956 danced sunwise. After some time she told *Kwalkwal* to call Thunder,
*787 telling him what to say, and to address this supernatural being by his shaman's name, *Xwinxwitsahumlaix*, instead of the usual *Saiatl*. *Kwalkwal* did as she bade him. Then the spectators again beat time, and again she danced, and for the second time her helper called to *Xwinxwitsahumlaix*. A third time the performance was repeated and after *Kwalkwal* had called she said to him:

"You have reached him, he is looking back towards us."

Some of the spectators began to be frightened. After the fourth time of dancing and calling, a violent peal of thunder was heard, and all believed her. Then she stood up and stated that she had learnt a song from *Älquntäm*, who had given her power in a dream. She taught the singers the following words:

"Our father in *Älquntäm* who is going to look after us."

After this she told the people to go to the river, throw water over their heads, and pray to *Älquntäm* to help them.

Next day she announced that she was going to a village on the Dean River to give a demonstration of her powers to convince the sceptics, and that she would like a number of the Kimsquit River people to accompany her. Some were unwilling, because they thought that if she were unsuccessful they would be held up to scorn, but *Snaqmais* assured them that if she failed she would commit suicide, so they consented to go with her. Arrived at the Dean River village, all the inhabitants gathered to meet her in the house of one of the principal chiefs. She danced as she had done in her own house, four times, and after each dance *Kwalkwal* summoned *Xwinxwitsahumlaix* on her behalf. After the fourth calling there was a violent peal of thunder, which convinced all of her power. She likewise taught them the tune that she had learnt in her dream from *Älquntäm*.

After this second demonstration *Snaqmais* asked some of her fellow villagers to accompany her to Bella Coola. Again they were afraid, especially as it was November when thunder is most unusual in British Columbia, but she quieted their fears and they set out with her. On reaching *Qomqo·ts* she went to the house of a chief, where the inhabitants both of that village and neighbouring ones soon gathered to greet her in such numbers that many had to remain outside. The shamaness danced as she had done on the previous occasions, and as before *Kwalkwal* called to *Xwinxwitsahumlaix*:

"Your comrade wants you."

Immediately after the fourth summons there was a violent peal of thunder, and those Bella Coola who had been uncertain of her power were

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convinced. She taught them the tune that she had obtained in her dream and for eight days remained in the vicinity, carrying out the instructions of *Äłquntäm* by healing the sick. She was able to cure a patient by merely looking at him, and pressing the place where the pain was situated. It was universally agreed that she had justified her claims to shamanism; the coming of Thunder three times could be no accident. *Äłquntäm* had given her the power and designated Thunder as the particular supernatural being to bring it to her. From him she received the name, *X'aisnewits-ahmlais*.

When *Snuqtnais* returned home to Kimsquit, she told her husband that he must never again hold intercourse with her or she would die. This is in accordance with an old tradition; at her suggestion they continued to live together, and he strictly obeyed her command for one year. Then he disobeyed it and she died immediately.

A KIMSQUIT *Snáqom*

A Kimsquit woman, *Kwsiyot*, claimed to be a *snáqom*, but the Bella Coola were unconvinced. On one occasion she, and a large number of Kimsquit people, came to Bella Coola where they were entertained in the house of *Pailo*; guests from the whole valley came there to see her and a doubter asked her to show her power. *Kwsiyot* complied with the request.

"I want a man with a strong wash-basin," she said.

When she had chosen her assistant she said to him:

"You shall be my medium. The people have asked for an exhibition of my skill, and I want you to repeat to the powers above what I tell you."

She said something to him, which he repeated. *Kwsiyot* laughed.

"That is good. They are moving," she remarked, "speak to them again."

He repeated her words a second, third, and fourth time at her bidding. Then she said to the spectators:

"Hide all the small children under the blankets."

Some were impressed and did as she had ordered, but others were sceptical and refrained. There came a crash and a blinding light, whereupon those who had neglected to cover their children hastily did so. A second, third, and fourth peal of thunder succeeded the first until the house boards rattled. Then she said to the doubter:

"What manifestation would you like, the powers are ready?"

"That is enough," he answered tersely, whereat everyone laughed.

Kwsiyot dismissed her mouthpiece and the meeting broke up. Next winter the smallpox reached Kimsquit, claiming among its other victims

* 756 * 787 539 a boy who was dearly loved by his father. The latter, thinking that *Kusiyot* was responsible for his son's death, killed her and was slain in revenge. Because of the doubts thrown by the Bella Coola on *Kusiyot*'s power and revelation her fame did not spread widely.

Power Localized in Certain Spots

778 [776] [773] To the Bella Coola every supernatural being is, or should be, able to move, in fact many of them can travel with phenomenal rapidity. But, in the beginning of time, when *Älquntäm* was populating the earth, he sent down certain creatures which were later turned to stone, thereby localizing their power. The term for a place where this happened is *smä·tl*, which can be translated with accuracy as, "A Locality Where Power has Become Petrified." It follows that anyone desirous of coming in contact with supernatural power of this type can do so by visiting the spot where it is situated. There [773] are not many of these places, nor do they figure prominently in Bella Coola mythology, and, as usual, there are many contradictions in the accounts. Apparently there is a tendency to ascribe the occurrence of peculiar experiences to localities where power is petrified. The following are the more important spots of this type, with a short account of the specific attributes of each.

773 778 539 (1) *Smaien·a*, also called *Sluxlekwaily:* At the head of the Clearwater, one of the sources of the Bella Coola River, and the place from which comes the warm east wind.

Concerning the origin of the power in this spot the following tale, which is regarded as very ancient, was obtained.

Long, long ago, the ocean spread far to the east, covering the whole Bella Coola valley.[14] The shoreline of the ocean was at the village *Sluxlekwaily*, so called from a chief of that name living there. Mount *Xlikwals*, which is now several miles inland, was then a point around which surged dangerous currents, and where there was always much wind, making it feared by mariners in those distant days. Tradition does not state what being drove back the ocean to its present position; it may have been Raven who made the Bella Coola valley habitable. 773 778 539

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[14] It is assumed that the world was unpopulated at that time, though mention is made of people who were living there. This does not strike the Bella Coola as a contradiction; the accuracy of an ancient story is never questioned; hence it is taken for granted that "people" in the modern sense, were not then in existence.

Once a war party from the north swooped down to attack *Sluxlekwaily*'s town. Although the chief's herald, who was stationed a mile below the settlement, called out a warning, the raiders were successful and carried off a number of slaves. *Sluxlekwaily* could not bear to think of his people as captives and accordingly exerted his miraculous power to turn the whole place to stone. Houses, raiders, captives, canoes with their carvings, and paddles can still be seen there, all petrified. They have become *smā·tl*.

According to another account, *Sluxlekwaily* exerted his powers to petrify the canoes and the bodies of his enemies before they reached his village. He asked the paddlers whither they were bound, and when they told him he, or the mountain which he later became, for there is a confusion between the two, invited them to land. On so doing they were changed to stone, and in this form can still be seen, complete even to the paddles, a proof that the ocean once extended far to the east of its present limit. Many Bella Coola have heard of these canoes, and they are said to have been seen recently.

Since that time the power animating the place has frequently become visible in the form of an enormous snake. There, too, are to be found countless smaller ones, a constant menace to the unwary. The following incidents describe the adventures of people passing near this spot: 778 539 [787]

The trail to the interior makes a detour to avoid *Sluxlekwaily*, but sometimes one of the reptiles, many of which are enormous, will be found lying across the track. If the traveller is bold and jumps over it, no harm will come to him, but if he should try to avoid it by going around, the single snake will increase to a multitude. Not only material objects, but the

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intelligence of *Sluxlekwaily* has become petrified there and resents any slights.

Four men were once passing the spot on their way to the interior when one of them, in bravado, pushed with his stick against the stones which once had been the houses of the village, saying as he did so:

"*Sluxlekwaily*, petrify us if you can, we are not afraid of you."

When he drew up his stick it was covered with small snakes; more appeared from everywhere and swarmed over the four like ants. They started to run, but three of them were crushed beneath the swarming creatures and nothing was ever seen of them. The fourth man drew his knife and with it slit his clothing, thus dislodging most of the snakes, and, naked, he was able to run away. He succeeded in reaching some people to whom he told the fate of his companions, but soon his stomach began to swell and he died. Snakes had entered his body and his case had been hopeless from the start.

On another occasion four girls had just climbed a steep and difficult trail behind the *smā·tl* to avoid passing through the place itself. On reaching the level land above, one of them called out:

"*Sluxlekwaily*, I am glad to be safely past you."

But the jealous *Sluxlekwaily* heard her. He sent a gale, the ground rocked, trees were torn and broken, and three of the girls were swept away to their death. One only escaped by wrapping herself around the bole of a tree.

Another time four Carriers on their way to the coast passed a boulder on the shore of a pool which is at *Sluxlekwaily*. Although aware of the power petrified there, they derided it by thrusting poles below the rock and asking it why it did not show its strength by taking revenge for the insults they offered it. When they pulled out the sticks they were covered with snakes, and more appeared from the trees and roots in the vicinity. The Carriers fled, pursued by them, and after running all day, managed to make their escape at dusk.

The place is still allegedly characterized by these reptiles; 778
a recent visitor found the branches of the trees like snakes, and 539
the very roots were in the form of them. The rocks in the vicinity are full of grooves like those made by snakes crawling through soft clay, and the whole neighbourhood reeks with their odour.

(2) *Pe·lslə*, Mesatche Nose: The point between North 778
Bentinck Arm and Labouchere Channel.

Here is found a *snasy*, one of the most powerful localized 776
beings, a creature comprising only a head and an arm with a mouth in the palm. The head can be seen in rock on the point not far above the waterline, but the giant arm rests far beneath the surface. At times the *snasy* bends its elbow so that the fist can support the head, as if the creature were pondering. On such occasions the upper part of the arm remains concealed below the water, while there is a gap about twenty-five yards in width between the upraised lower part and the rocky shore beneath the animal's head. A canoe can pass in safety through this, narrow though the channel is; but if it should take a course on the outer side of the arm the latter will crash down on the helpless craft, crushing it to splinters and driving these far beneath the surface. There has never been a survivor from such a catastrophe. The last time the arm was raised was about seventy years ago when a war party was returning to the north after raiding *Täl·io*. They knew the necessity of taking the inner channel, so escaped unharmed, though they actually handled the mighty upraised limb. The Bella Coola firmly believe that the *snasy* will some day lift its arm again, and will crush the steamer that carries mail and passengers up the coast.

It was only a few hundred years ago that a certain Bella 778
Bella learnt of the respect with which the other supernatural 539
beings regard the *snasy* of Mesatche Nose. The canoe in which this man was travelling was sucked down beneath the ocean, but *Qomoqua* admitted him as a guest to his house. The chief had invited all the underwater supernatural beings to a pot-

778 539 latch, and the only vacant spot was the central seat behind the fire. Retainer after retainer was sent after someone, until finally the wondering human heard a steady thump, thump, approaching. It was the Mesatche Nose *snaix*, travelling on his single arm, like a looper caterpillar, his head balanced precariously on top while the thump came every time that he brought his fist to the floor. On his entry, the paintings of fish and marine animals, with which the walls and boxes were covered, came to life and cavorted around as if mad, but when the chief took his seat behind the fire they returned to their pictorial form. From this experience the Bella Bella man obtained a *susaak* name and myth.

778 (3) The Hot Springs on Labouchere Channel where the mysterious power is that of a snake.

(4) A ledge of rock projecting over the water at a point on the west side of Dean Channel about nine miles below Kimsquit.

(5) *Qhapalus*: On the south side of Burke Channel, a few miles above Kwatna Inlet.

(6) *Snawals*: On South Bentinck Arm, at a spot where the water penetrates far under a ledge of rock.

(7) *Nukilä-ata*: On the east side of South Bentinck Arm, where an enormous spider has been changed to stone. The many colours of its body can be plainly seen amid the numerous holes in the vicinity.

(8) The Hot Springs on South Bentinck Arm.

778 539 823 (9) Mount *Nusqalst*, the highest mountain in the Bella Coola valley, belongs to the same category, since in the beginning of time it was a man.

103 He, *Nūnalskwail*, (which means "Too Heavy" in the sense of "so important") came to earth from above at Cape Mudge and decided to visit Bella Coola. He stalked through the land to the site of the present Mount *Nusqalst*, wearing a high hat around which crawled two snakes whose heads often crossed. From where he stood, he saw the lofty mountain *Xapis* in the Carrier country, and resolved to visit it. At that distant period this peak was a human being and from him *Nūnalskwail*

obtained two wives, the name of one being *T̓hisla*. He returned to Bella 778
Coola with them. 530

Nānalskwitl knew that presently he was fated to become immobile, a 823
seat of petrified power. Since he was able to select where this was to be,
he chose the site of Mount *Nusq̓alst*, midway in the Bella Coola valley, as 103
a convenient place to overlook the doings of men. Before he transformed himself into this mountain, he determined that he would have people visit him; accordingly he changed his axe, *Nuskmidjusta*, which he carried concealed beneath his blanket, into *sq̓alst*, a stone much used for axes and adzes. Until the introduction of white man's tools his wish was [316]
gratified; people came from far and near to obtain the necessary material.

The human origin of the mountain is still remembered, since it is often spoken of by its chiefly names, *Nānalskwitl* and *T̓hisla*, relics of its existence as a man. This story is regarded as an origin myth, and as such might have been included in vol. I, chap. VI.

This mountain is regarded with awe by the Bella Coola on account of its great height, but it seems to lack most of the characteristics ascribed to other places where power has been petrified.

(10) On one of the mountains above Cascade Inlet there 778
used to be a stone eagle with outstretched wings which came to
this earth with the first people, but was petrified one day when
drying its wings after fishing. About 1860 part of its beak fell [164]
away. A change in the condition of any of these places had [787] *
long been regarded as an omen of misfortune, so the epidemic
of smallpox that soon after ravaged the coast was not unexpected.

(11) *Ālksmos*: An unidentified spot where a *smnq* of the mountain was petrified. At this place there is a small pool which is the repository (II, p. 8) of a certain *kusiut* dancer.

(12) *uxpekam*, "The Walker," the name both of a super- [776]
natural being and the spot where it is localized. This is not
far from the glacier that lies near the junction of the trails from *Snutli* and *Tāl·io*; it is the largest one in the vicinity of Bella Coola and is said to move its position. The being is in some way connected with it, hence the name.

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778 About half a mile from the glacier there is a large rock shelter where mountain goat hunters are wont to smoke their
* 787 meat. They are always careful to take with them dyed and
[251] undyed cedar-bark and eagle down, knowing that they may encounter the supernatural. Sometimes they hear the voice of *sxpsham*, a deep, long drawn-out hum, *m*······. If this sound is repeated *four* times it is a happy augury, but if heard only once it presages ill fortune. In either case some member of the party, one who is ceremonially clean and is brave, blackens his face, puts on a collar of dyed cedar-bark, covered with eagle down, steps outside, and says in effect:

"Hail! Petrified One. In the beginning you came down from *Alquntäm*, from all that was wonderful and powerful. You have not changed, hence we mortals can still hear your voice. Please, may it be well with us. There is none other like you."

If the supplicant is ceremonially clean the mountain will answer *hi*·······, four times, and there will be heard what sounds like a great landslide. Then the petitioner takes some small portions of meat, some dyed and some undyed cedar-bark, and eagle down and throws them on the fire.

"Please accept, Oh *Kusiant*" (Powerful One), he says.

Thus propitiated, *sxpsham* grants them success in hunting.

778 (13) *Spipiqlsdn i*: On the south side of the Dean River about one mile from its mouth. Here, in the beginning of time, Raven cast his war-knife, *sfla*, which was turned to stone and can still be seen. Its power has likewise become localized at this point.

(14) In the beginning of time Mount *Swaky*, near the Dean River, was a man who was turned to stone. Across the river is his wife, *Aslsalsnukl*, whose ancestral name is *Kamilkän*, likewise petrified.

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[785] In most of these places[1] a sick person can receive assistance, if he is willing to risk the consequent dangers. The first essential is that he be in a "clean" condition by the observance of

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[1] [i.e. - certain spots where power is localized - see cat. 116, pp 594-600 for their location - ANALYST]

ceremonial chastity. This state is pleasing to supernatural 755
beings, who otherwise are likely to punish one trespassing on 778
their haunts. The Bella Coola have not clearly formulated [785]
their beliefs with regard to these places, consequently the experiences of one individual are usually quite different from those of another, a circumstance regarded as quite natural on the assumption that the supernatural beings are able to manifest themselves in many ways.

Shalshwaily and the Hot Springs on Labouchere Channel are the places that figure most commonly in mythology. At the former is *Shalshwaily*'s chamber-vessel, a pool always full of clear water though not fed by any spring. If a person suffering from the virulent skin disease known as *Hohuls* swims in it, drinks some of the water, and then vomits, he will recover.

Not only the pond itself, but the whole neighbourhood, is
the seat of mysterious power, as the following tale describes. 755

Near the western end of the pool there is a rock from which 778
long ago three men dived and failed to return. A sick man 539
decided to do the same and leapt in, feet first, wearing around his chest some dyed cedar-bark. He plunged through the water and found that he was standing on the roof of a house; he walked around it, then returned to the surface, and back to his starting point. He dived three times more, and when he emerged for the fourth time his sickness had left him. He returned to Bella Coola and told of his experience. Since that time sick people have been carried to the pool, and have dived in from the same rock, always feet first, and always wearing dyed cedar-bark. All are able to feel the roof of the house, and are cured by the immersion.

The trail used by the Carrier Indians when raiding the 778
coastal tribes passed by this lake, and on one occasion the Bella 787*
Coola, bent on retaliation, used the same path and paused to
rest on the shore. They all bathed in the pool and asked 539
help from the power there localised, then as they lay on the grass drying their long hair in the sunshine, a house emerged. Slowly it floated upwards, filling the whole area formerly occu-

778 pied by the water, and came to rest when it had risen to the
787 usual height of a house. As each of the spectators gazed upon
it he saw within that on which his own mind was centred. As
539 it were in perspective he visualized his whole life, both past
and future. One man saw the slaying of an enemy, another
a potlatch with himself in the role of donor, another his children, and a sensual individual saw a man and woman in the
sexual act. To each it appeared that the house contained only
one image. Then slowly the house sank into the depths. The
party went on and had great success, killing their enemies, who
were powerless before them, without the loss of a single Bella
[755] Coola. It was this house which the sick people felt with their
feet; the sight of it had given the warriors phenomenal ability.

778 Another seat of power is near the western end of the lake
787 where the trail passes between two piles of dark red rocks that
rise to a height of three or four feet. Each is roughly squared
like a brick with dimensions of approximately 8 by 6 by 6
inches. The heaps are not regular, and yet form a distinct
cairn. If a passer-by wishes to ascertain the length of his life,
he takes a stick and shoves out one of the stones, which rolls
far down the hillside; if he can do so without disturbing the
rest, he will have long life, but should fate decree for him a
short one, the whole pile falls in disorder. Another sign of long
life is when the mass sways back and forth, emitting a squeaking sound like the leather in a new shoe, as he endeavours to
poke out one of the rocks of which it is composed. On the
traveller's return from the interior the heap has always assumed its original shape, though no one has ever seen one of
the stones being picked up by human agency.

778 Sick people also derive benefit from immersion in the Hot
[755] Springs on Labouchere Channel. The following account was
obtained from a man who himself underwent treatment there.
539 When a young man he had been initiated into the *kusiut*
society as a Breaker (II, p. 123) and as such wore a bear-skin
778 cloak. His relatives were wealthy and advised him to keep
his robe, saying that they would make it possible for him to

dance again in eight years. Four years later, one of his fellow- 778
villagers offered him five skins for the one which he had used, 539
and, when this was declined, the number was raised to ten,
then to fifteen, and finally to twenty new bear-skins. As there
was no particular value in the mantle itself, the owner became
suspicious and asked advice from his mother who admonished
him not to sell, in view of the time when he would want it.
Accordingly, he did not accept the offer, but when it was in-
creased to twenty-five skins he did so. He did not know that [754]
the purchaser's desire for it was to enable him to injure the seller
by magic through the acquisition of this personal possession.

The sale took place in April, and the following December 778
the former owner became crippled with a disease which so 755
weakened his back that he could hardly raise himself from
the ground. When the sickness had lasted for one year, his 539
friends carried him away to the Hot Springs on Labouchere 787 *
Channel.

It was known that if a patient were left night and day in the spring, scrubbing himself with hemlock boughs, he often was given such power by a supernatural being that, like a shaman of old, he could kill or cure by means of a stick. Many of this man's relatives had been killed by rivals envious of their success in giving potlatches, so it was feared that he might wish to retaliate if he gained too much power. To prevent this, he was removed from the spring at night. On the first day as he lay on a mat in the warm water, there appeared on a flat stone a diminutive man, about two feet tall, resembling a Bella Coola except for a short tail. It was probably a *tlāqmā·ks*, [776]
such as his first ancestor had obtained (I, p. 688). The little creature ran around the stone; when it returned to the starting point it stopped and was joined by a second one of the same kind. The two circled the stone three times, on each occasion stopping at the starting point; they then vanished. The next day while the patient lay in the stream he heard from within the mountain four beats of a drum and a sound as if a large number of people were talking and calling together, though he

778 could not distinguish any actual words. This ceased, to be
755 followed by the hissing sound of escaping steam; the water
became so unbearably hot that, crippled though he was, he
539 managed to crawl out. His courage soon revived, so, wrapping
* 787 his head in his blanket, he returned to the spring. The water
was still unpleasantly hot on his body and legs, but the covering protected his head. The same phenomenon occurred on the two following days. Four days later he was well enough to walk and was brought home. During his treatment he saw supernatural beings, and is still hoping for a further revelation that will make him a shaman. He believes that this would have been granted to him if his friends had allowed him to remain in the spring overnight.

755 During the four days of his immersion he ate nothing, and
his only nourishment was a little mountain goat grease which he did not swallow but kept in the right side of his mouth. After each bath he scrubbed himself with hemlock boughs. As in all
[785] such cases, for one year he observed continence and refrained
[761] from eating unsmoked salmon. Failure to observe these taboos
would have caused his death.[15]

755 According to another account the creature that visits a
patient lying in the Hot Springs is a *bäbʌnk‘*. As already de-
776 scribed, it is a hairless animal, about as large as a small moose,
with legs so short that its belly almost scrapes the ground, no tail, and a large head with glass-like eyes. The whole appearance suggests an enormous walking snake. This animal approaches the sick person, as he lies on a flat stone[16] in the spring, and takes a bite from wherever the sickness is situated. No wound can afterwards be seen, but the ailment is carried away with the biting. If the patient should lack courage and endeavour to escape he would soon die.

776 Others of these animals of the same or similar variety have
been observed about forty miles up the Bella Coola valley.

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[15] See vol. I, p. 609 for further results of this treatment.

[16] There are two of these, one used by men and one by women.

Between 1890 and 1900 two more were seen near Double Mountain. 776
The last Bella Coola to see these animals left *Stuɩx* one morning armed 787 *
with a light shot-gun. He followed the trail to the interior and was
crossing the bare mountain, *Kotɩnk‘*, about forty-eight miles from the sea, 539
when he decided to turn aside to shoot some of the ducks which breed in great quantities on the small lakes near the top of the mountain. As he stalked through the grass he heard a rustling, and crawled so that he could get a better view of the place whence it came. He saw two *babɩnk‘* which were catching ducks with their long tongues by shooting them out from their mouths. After watching them for some time the man returned to the camp without disturbing them. This man has only recently died. In former times they were more common, but one was seen not many years ago by a Carrier Indian.

According to other informants, no one knows what supernatural 778
visitor comes to the spring, since it always appears at night, and any one
who is rash enough to look at it dies immediately. A bold patient lies [755]
still, with eyes closed, while he is massaged back to health.

Another man, while fishing for one of the canneries, had been in the 778
habit of landing at the Hot Springs to get hot water for his tea. He drew
it from a small trickle which emerged from a rock near at hand. On one 539
occasion the flow stopped when he put his pot beneath, but recommenced on his withdrawing it. Thinking this a mere accident, he reinserted the vessel only to have the water cease again. When this had happened four times, he realized that the cessation had been intended by some supernatural power.

"Hail! Powerful One," he called out. "I understand you now."

He knew that it must be some creature within the rock that had stopped the flow, not wishing it to be so used, and since then he has obtained his water elsewhere.

Leaving these tales of the past, which stress the super- 778
natural, and passing from the experiences of men of sensitive, 755
imaginative disposition, it is possible to describe the methods
commonly employed by the Bella Coola when wishing to take 787 *
advantage of the curative properties of these localities. In [539]
cases of serious illness it is common for a sufferer to make the rounds of all five places located on the ocean. This was done, for example, by the father of an informant who had seen what he took to be a spring salmon in an inland stream where no ocean salmon should have been. He was foolish enough to leap in to catch the fish, which was really a *sɩsiutl*, and as it

778 rushed past him it brushed his legs. From its malign touch
755 they became as if tied together at the knees, so that he could
hardly walk. When all other cures failed he bathed in all the
* [787] healing places on the coast, and was cured by the time he had
returned to Bella Coola.

[785] Before embarking on such an expedition, a sufferer must observe continence for at least three months, and continue this after his return, otherwise he will die. It is wise to start at *Snuwals*, on South Bentinck Arm, proceeding from there down South Bentinck Arm, across Labouchere Channel, and towards Kimsquit, since in this way the patient travels sunwise, increasing the potency of his efforts.

At *Snuwals* there is a ledge of rock that projects out over the water; the sick person dives through a hole into the fiord. From this point he proceeds to *Nukilā·xta*, on the east side of South Bentinck Arm, about half a mile above the Hot Springs. This is the place of the giant, many-coloured spider, turned to stone. Among its legs there are numerous holes in which the patient lays a stick and pieces of his clothing, taken from the part of the body affected, saying as he does so:

"Please, Powerful One, help me to return to strength."

The third place of curing is the Hot Springs on South Bentinck Arm, *Ixpe·xam*. Here the patient lies in the hot water and leaves portions of his worn clothing as some sort of vague offering to the being there. The Bella Coola have no clear conception as to why the scraps should be left; apparently they have never considered whether it was actually of service to the being. At the present time it appears to be only a ritual handed down from great antiquity.

Leaving South Bentinck Arm the patient proceeds to the Hot Springs on Labouchere Channel, the characteristics of which have already been described. The final place visited is *Anulxwam*, on the west side of Dean Channel about nine miles below Kimsquit, where the ocean penetrates far under a ledge of rock. The sufferer is lowered through a vent about six feet in diameter until he stands on a boulder at the edge of the sea

in a kind of a cave. He here unties the rope, dives into the 778
water and out through a narrow passage to the open fiord
where he is picked up by a waiting canoe. 755

If he is to recover, he feels as he dives the scraping of some [787] *
rough-skinned animal against his side. No one knows what
this is, perhaps a fish about seventy yards in length which was
seen near the place about 1905. If a person is too ill to make
the dive unaided, a stick is forced through the entrance from
the fiord, with a rope attached. The patient, who has been
lowered to the ledge from the upper air, is then tied firmly to
the stick and hauled out. Before leaving, shreds of his clothing
are always left at the mouth of the cave in payment to its
supernatural occupant for his assistance.

The method of curing at the spot, *Ăllssmos*, differs from
those previously described since it is only the man whose
repository (II, p. 8) is there who is able to exercise the power.
Patients whose flesh has become rotten are carried to the place
and he scrubs their bodies, in the water, with various prickly
bushes. This man is not a shaman, his power rests solely [756]
on the fact that this curing place is his repository.

At *ıxẓekam* the virulent skin disease *łłokılẓ* can be cured.[17]
This is caused by a morsel of cohoe salmon ~~or~~ fern root passing [753]
from the mouth up into the head, instead of down into the
stomach. The Bella Coola have only slight knowledge of [826]
anatomy, and by "head" probably mean the passage con-
necting mouth and nose. In this spot the food becomes a [753]
frog egg, hatches into a tadpole, and finally transforms into
a frog. If a shaman is called on immediately, he can remove [756]
the frog by thrusting his finger up the nasal passage and
banging down on the patient's head, but if he delays, the ears
and nose become clogged, the hair falls, and the flesh on arms
and body wastes away until the skin is shrivelled. Then the
only hope is to visit *ıxẓekam*.

Friends of the sufferer carry him to the spot and place him
in an ice cavern, roofed by the glacier itself, and then retire to

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[17] In its earlier stages it can be treated elsewhere.

778 the rock shelter half a mile away. Here he must lie alone,
755 without food, for four days. If he is in a pure condition from
the observance of chastity, he then feels the earth shake and
* [787] hears a sound like a mighty landslide, though it is inaudible
to those waiting in the cave. If the patient is frightened and
tries to flee, he will die, but if he lies still he will be able to spit
out the dead frog, or it will become so soft that it can drip
from his nose. He then washes in the stream that flows
[785] through the ice-cavern, thus completing the cure. The malady
will return unless chastity is practised for one year.

756 Finally, in dreams a man is sometimes carried away to one
or other of these curing places, or to several of them, and is
* 787 there made a shaman. It will be noted that this method of
acquiring the ability differs from those previously described,
but his functions are the same as those whose power has been
obtained in one of the usual ways.

Dreams

* 787 The last type of contact with the supernatural is by means
of dreams. Psychologically, these are akin to visions; indeed,
it is often impossible to learn whether the experiences described
in an ancient story occurred during sleep or when awake. The
[774] Bella Coola believe that dreams are caused by the spirit of the
individual; they are, therefore, supernatural and worthy of
attention, but in spite of this, it was difficult to obtain detailed
accounts. The reason seems to lie in the intangibility of the
experiences themselves. Unless one is sufficiently striking, it
passes into oblivion as a fruitless manifestation of the workings
of the spirit. Many of the visions seen in ancient times by
those who had fasted or otherwise reached an emotional state,
must have been dreams, but they have ceased to be recognized
as such in the course of generations. The Bella Coola of today
[159] state emphatically that they receive warning of future events
during sleep, but the only individual from whom it was possible
to obtain coherent descriptions was the elderly man
previously described as X (I, p. 515).

In his younger days X was somewhat wild, taking his full share in 159
the frivolities of the village, and having a fondness for wine which he
brewed himself. On one occasion he prepared a barrel of the mixture, 787*
half of which he promptly consumed with the aid of a few friends, then,
semi-intoxicated, he fell asleep. He dreamt that there came to him what [273]
must have been a male being, although all that was visible was the lower
half of his body, which was gleaming white. The apparition seized X by
the nape of the neck, lifted him from the floor, and carried him across the
house to the barrel of wine, revolving sunwise on himself the while.

"You made this fearful stuff," said his supernatural visitor. "It will make your life dirty, as dirty as this."

Still turning sunwise on himself, with these words he carried X to the
doorstep and held him suspended, face downwards over it. Everyone
who enters must tread there, so that it is recognized as being the dirtiest
part of the house, and X had no doubt about the meaning of the appari-
tion's remark. This experience was so vivid and impressive that X [797]
asserted he immediately became a Christian and abandoned his evil ways.
At the present time he is one of the few Bella Coola not addicted to [273]
home-brew.

A few years later the same being came a second time. X had been
ill for a number of months with a sickness caused, so he believed, by a
sorcerer. His friends had carried him to bathe in the Hot Springs and [755]
the treatment helped his condition considerably, but a little later he
suffered a relapse, and was so wretched that he told his mother he would
die presently. The same night he was visited by his apparition, but this
time he could see the whole body; it was a man with large, powerful
frame and a face so white that he could not bear to look at it. The figure
was clad in undyed cedar-bark, and X immediately realized that he would
recover, though he knew he would not be granted the same power as if
the clothing had been of dyed cedar-bark such as is worn by supernatural
shamans. The dream-man told X that he had come to him because of
the clean condition he had attained by washing in the Hot Springs, fol-
lowed by continence, and warned him that he must continue this for a
year from the time of his immersion or he would die, but that if he obeyed
this injunction he would recover. His visitor, who was, of course, a super-
natural being, took X under one arm and carried him far to the south,
where he washed him in a hot spring at the base of a steep mountain.
Then he vanished; X arose and prepared to make his way home, but, lo,
he was there already. Rationalizing later, X concluded that his body
must have remained in his house, and that it was either his spirit or his
life that had been carried away.

As X lay asleep the next night, the same being came to him and

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*787

carried him far away to the west, where he was washed in another spring, and as before found himself at home immediately after his immersion. The following night the apparition took him to the north; he found himself on the shore of a lake where an expert carpenter, *Qwaiutsamlaix*, was making tiny canoes of jack pine. The trees were only about six feet in height, smaller than any human craftsman would think of using. The supernatural being told *Qwaiutsamlaix* to make a canoe for X; he did this within a few minutes and the apparition vanished as soon as X was aboard. The craft moved with the speed of light and X was carried across the lake, only to find himself once more at home. The fourth night the being bore him to the east, washed him in a hot spring, and vanished as he had done on his first and second appearances. The repetition of this experience four times fully convinced the patient that he would recover. His health improved at once; in fact, his appetite had returned after his first dream.

As X lay sleepless[18] the next night, it suddenly seemed to him that the world had become flat and open. From his couch he could see in all directions; the trees had disappeared, the mountains had vanished, and the walls of the houses did not bar his vision, so that he could watch what was happening in *Tcimotl* several miles up the valley. He saw a naked, black creature, with curly hair like that of a negro, rise from one of the small ponds on the south side of the Bella Coola valley about two miles from the sea. Helpless, he watched the being draw nearer; it entered his own house, seized him, and rolled him to and fro on the floor with wild contortions. Then it passed on to the next house where X saw it grip a sick girl lying there and treat her in the same way. After a few minutes the black apparition fled far away to the south where at length it vanished from view. In the morning he told his mother what had happened, adding that he thought he would lose his senses.

His mother, worried at her son's hallucinations, agreed to remain awake with him the following night. Again he saw the black monster rise from the lake, and he called to her in fear, but she could see nothing. Once more it came nearer, entered the house, and rolled X over and over, in spite of his struggles and in spite of his mother's presence. She could see his movements, but could neither restrain him nor see the cause. When the being left him it entered the adjacent house and again attacked the sick girl lying there, then disappeared southward. The same procedure was repeated on the third night, but on the fourth, after pummelling X, the monster carried away the girl. X watched and knew that it must have taken her life; so it transpired, for in the morning she was found dead. The black being did not reappear the following night. 159 787 *

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[18] As already mentioned, it is often difficult to differentiate between dream and vision. X definitely stated that he was awake at the time, but the experience seems to be of the nature of a dream and has, therefore, been included in this section.

X soon became fat and well, to the surprise of all, and many of the chiefs asked him to give a shaman's dance. He declined, not having received name, instructions, song, or tangible object from the white, supernatural being who had befriended him. He did not even know his benefactor's name. [756]

At intervals during his life-time, X has seen the white supernatural being and, more rarely, the black one in his dreams. The most vivid occasion was when he heard a sound in the attic of his house and climbed up outside to investigate. The ladder broke, precipitating him through an unglazed window into the loft with a broken leg. All night he lay there in agony, and it was not until the next day that his friends were able to lower him in a sling and take him to *Q̣omq̣o·ts* en route to the hospital at Bella Bella. Their departure was delayed by a storm and as X lay suffering he told his wife that it would have been better if he had broken his neck instead of his leg. That night, while half-asleep, the world again became open to him and he saw the black creature come bounding along the trail towards him; it entered the house, jumped around him, and finally leapt into his body. He called to his wife to burn dried salmon beneath his bed to expel the evil monster; this had the desired effect though he did not see its actual departure. [755] The next night the white apparition came to him, telling him that he had erred seriously in wishing for death, that one should accept what was in store for one and not oppose *Älquntäm*'s wishes. The being went on to say that it was wicked to prepare too far in advance, and intimated that X's misfortune was the result of having made ready tools for clearing an unnecessary tract of land.[19]

The white being has even appeared during his waking hours. On one occasion he felt it coming when he was in the mission-house, where the missionary was writing a letter for him. Although still invisible, X knew what was approaching and tried to close the door but he was helpless. In came the apparition, at sight of whom X swayed so violently that the missionary asked what was the matter. It went away again in a moment, leaving X shaken and bathed in perspiration. [797]

The experiences just described lie on the border-line between dream and vision. X has frequently seen the apparition

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[19] This occurred during the first war, and X remembered having heard that the Germans had laid up stores of munitions. He concluded that this must be evil and that they would fail accordingly. He repeated this statement on many occasions and claims to have foretold the result of the war from his vision.

159 in his sleep, and hopes that it will grant him specific super-
natural power. He realizes that he could increase the prob-
* 787 ability of obtaining this by ceremonial chastity, and believes
[785] that it would come to him if he went alone to the woods and
lay fasting for some time. Another means would be to con-
[797] centrate his thoughts upon the desired end, but X is too good
a Christian to do so; he is in the unhappy position of knowing
too much of two religions to be able to practise either unreservedly. Such experiences are not likely to occur to any but a man of high-strung, imaginative temperament, to whom dreams and mental excitements appear especially vivid. X is intensely religious, so that it is easy for him to interpret every phenomenon in terms of the supernatural. It will be noted that most of the dreams just described took place when he was sick, precisely the time when hallucinations are to be expected. They were more coherent than those of most Bella Coola, though the difference is one of degree rather than of kind.

Most dreams are comparatively simple, and the informa-
* 787 tion received in them is intelligible. They come to all, irre-
spective of rank or prerogative. Nevertheless, it is believed
[828] that an inheritable tendency runs in some families; this does
not mean that all members of such a group dream constantly,
[821] but they are more likely to do so than others. Those occurring
at the winter solstice are more carefully observed than at other
[773] times, since it is then that the supernatural beings decide events
for the coming year and a man's spirit may be able to inform
[777] him of what has been decided. Consequently, as soon as
Ālquntām enters *Nusmāt·a*, wise men separate from their wives
[785] and concentrate on dreaming, hoping to learn what is in store
for them. For instance, if a man sees himself seated before a large pile of goods, he knows that he will have the good fortune to do this during the coming year; on the other hand, if he foresees ill luck, it means that he will be unfortunate. Another
[821] time when dreams are especially desired is before the summer
solstice when hunters in particular observe ceremonial chas-
[224] tity. This purification not only increases the likelihood of such
[785]

experiences, but adds to the reliability of their prognostications. At that season, if a hunter dreams that he will not be successful, he remains at home knowing that it will be useless for him to seek game. 787* [785] [224]

Though dreams are considered and remembered most carefully at the solstices, it must not be imagined that they are disregarded at other seasons. Often there is neither mental picture nor apparition, merely a voice, the sound of which indicates that the hearer will be fortunate the following day. Instead of a voice without body, a dream may consist of a speechless apparition which indicates by gestures the fate in store for the dreamer. One elderly Bella Coola who keeps a small shop states that he can usually tell in this way whether or not he will sell much goods during the coming day. Many years ago, after frequent visits from a being of this kind, the man became the leading fisherman for one of the canneries; he attributed his success to his nameless benefactor, for whose benefit he threw a number of small pieces of food into the fire. Occasionally, specific information or advice is received. On one occasion, when this same man was ill, he dreamt that a supernatural being appeared and told him to wash in the river, that it was breath to all human beings; he did so regularly, and was soon restored to health. Sometimes the information is with regard to the future. On the night of January 15, 1924, he dreamt that two naked Carriers were standing beside his bed. He asked them what they wanted, and why they were without clothing. 159 787*

"We always appear as an omen of trouble in the land," they answered.

Next day there was a heavy fall of snow which he regarded as fulfilling the prophecy. The dreamer was X, the man of imaginative temperament who had beheld the white and black supernatural beings. These instances illustrate the manner in which the same individual has repeated experiences of similar type. X claims that he began to dream when a small child,

* 787 and that his mother stated that all her ancestors had done
[159] likewise.

Another instance of advice conveyed in this manner was
756 told by a Kimsquit man who related that a number of years
* 787 ago a pregnant woman had dreamed that *Alquntäm* appeared
to her and told her not to destroy what she would presently
bear. In due course she was delivered, but the infant was a
[847] repulsive cripple, blind and deformed. Remembering the
admonition, the mother refused to slay her child as many of
her friends advised. Soon it was apparent that he was supernaturally
endowed; as proof of this he repeated comments
which had been made to his mother within a few minutes of
his birth. As he grew older he developed shamanistic powers
so that he was able to converse with the dead, the only instance
known of this ability being granted from birth. He also had
wonderful talent as a singer and, though he must have died
about 1850, the Bella Coola still recount his skill in this respect.
[847] He would unquestionably have been killed but for his mother's
warning.

* 787 Instead of imparting verbal information, dreams frequently
foretell the future by means of images of events about to
happen. For example, if a man dreams of owning large num-
[224] bers of pelts, it signifies that he will have success in hunting,
and he starts for his trap-line without delay. So, too, warnings
are conveyed. A number of years ago a slave woman of *Sɪnxł*,
who was not a member of the *kusiut* society, dreamt that she
saw herself bitten in many places and lying covered with blood.
Within a few days she met a Cannibal dancer (II, p. 71), who
was supposed to have vanished into the land above; he killed
her and lacerated her body, as she had seen. A Kimsquit
man told of a similar instance that happened to a member of
the party with which he had been hunting a number of years
previously. One night he was wakened by one of his companions,
Tsālits, calling out that he was afraid because he had
dreamt that one side of their canoe was shattered. The
hunters were impressed, because they knew he had long ob-

served ceremonial chastity and was, therefore, in a good posi- 787*
tion to receive premonitions of this kind. The next day, as
they were paddling down the river, they came upon some
treacherous ice. Forewarned, they hastily abandoned their
canoe, one side of which was soon broken in the way *Ṫsälits*
had described; if they had continued their journey they would
certainly have been drowned.

The dreams thus far recorded have all been capable of
simple explanation; in fact, their meaning is obvious, either
visually or audibly. In addition, there are a number of types
considered to be symbolic by the Bella Coola. There are no [791]
professional interpreters, but it is believed that in ancient times
shamans learnt the significance of certain images and this [756]
knowledge has since been transmitted from generation to
generation.

One type indicates a coming birth. If a woman dreams 787*
that she travels to some distant spot, under the ocean or into
the mountains, and there takes something in her hand, it signi- 843
fies that she will soon bear a male child; on the other hand, if
she picks up some small object when gathering berries, a
daughter will be born. A Kimsquit informant stated that
before his birth, his mother dreamt that she had gone far under
the mouth of the Dean River to the vicinity of *Q̣omoqwa*'s
house, where she had taken up a child. From this she knew
she was pregnant and he was born in due course. If the scene
of the dream is in the mountains, it means that the child will
be a good hunter; if under water, that he will be a successful
fisherman, as it proved in this case. There is a vague belief 787*
that death takes place either near the spot where the mother
received indication of conception, or that the life and spirit of [761]
the deceased visit the place before setting out on their journey [775]
back from generation to generation. The old man from whom
this information was obtained expects to meet death by
drowning, though he is himself uncertain whether his pre-
monition is due to his mother's dream or to the fact that there
has been a tendency for this to occur in his family.

* 787 843 If a woman dreams that she has caught two salmon, two small birds, or is holding two infants, the birth of twins is foretold. This type of explanation is obvious; in fact, these examples lie on the border-line between direct and symbolic interpretations.

* 787 843 775 [553] Another indication of approaching pregnancy is for a woman to dream of a dead relative; this means that the latter will soon be re-born. An elderly Kimsquit man mentioned that some fifty years earlier his mother dreamt that her dead mother came to her, saying that she was lonesome and wished to return. Soon afterwards she conceived, and the daughter born was considered to be the reincarnation of her own grandmother whose names she was promptly given. At the present time, this informant addresses his sister as sister, though he states that as a child he was taught to call her grandmother. As already mentioned, if a new-born infant is a reincarnation, the fact can often be recognized by holes or dimples in the ears, relics of previous borings for rings. Unless such a birth has been foretold in a dream, it is impossible to learn whom the child re-embodies.

* 787 [761] [731] A dream of frequent occurrence in Bella Coola is the return of the sleeper to the scenes and activities of his childhood. This always signifies a long life. Strangely enough, to dream of being nailed in one's coffin and carried to the grave is translated conversely, and likewise indicates a long life. It is remembered that there were many dreams of fire before the outbreak of the smallpox epidemic, so it has since been assumed that such presage an outbreak of this disease.

* 787 224 [785] The only dreams of which the interpretations are wholly symbolic are those experienced by hunters. The Bella Coola explain this by saying that hunters always observe ceremonial chastity and their spirits are, therefore, in a receptive condition to supernatural impressions. When a man has set his traps, he is able to tell from his dreams whether or not any animals have been caught:

To dream that a canoe has been upset in the river and that a lad has been drowned in spite of efforts to rescue him, means that a beaver has been caught. 787* 224

To dream of seeing a *kusiut* dancer in full costume means that a fisher, lynx, wolverine, mountain goat, wolf, or black bear has been caught.

To dream of fighting people, especially if arrows are used, means that a grizzly bear has been caught.

To dream of playing children means that deer will be seen the following day.

To dream of swimming means that an otter has been caught.

To dream of fondling a woman and playing with her breasts means that a marten has been caught.

Obscene dreams mean that squirrels or pack-rats have been caught.

To dream of a woman with whom the hunter has held illicit intercourse means that absolutely nothing has been caught.

Until recent years these interpretations were believed without question and no hunter bothered to examine his traps unless he had received such indications of success. A hunter's wife likewise obtains information of her husband's fortune in dreams. [178]

All dreams cannot be translated. One man, for example, stated that in his sleep he had often seen a supernatural being enter his house, turn to the left, pick up one of the heavy floor boards and carry it around the fire as if it had been a tray. The apparition always told him to do likewise, but though he has tried repeatedly in his dreams, he has always found it too heavy. Such an image might serve a shaman as theme for a dramatic performance, though, of course, the element of curing the sick would be lacking. Another dream experienced several times by the same man when ill is that of being carried with the speed of light to a flat land somewhat similar to this, but located on the top of a range of lofty mountains. It contains numerous grassy meadows studded with trees of which the 787* [756] tops are all dead.' Here he meets all prosperous Bella Coola, but as soon as a man has fallen into poverty he ceases to be present in the dream land. The visionary regards this as an indication of a speedy recovery.

An effort was made to learn whether or not the Bella Coola are acquainted with several of the types of dreams experienced by other peoples. Some of these have already been mentioned. Dreams of fire are common, and one elderly man described one in which he saw on Mount *Q̣ámcax* a mighty conflagration from which sparks flew all over lower Bella Coola valley, severely burning those on whom they lit. Another type is for the sleeper to imagine himself so heavy that he presses down the earth until he can see in all directions, and still another of losing one's teeth. No interpretation is offered for either of these. To dream of climbing a tree seems to be unknown.

As already mentioned, the subject was difficult to investigate. This section undoubtedly does not exhaust the lore of the Bella Coola concerning dreams, but it is a fair presentation of the part which they play in the lives of the people.

CHAPTER X

STORIES ILLUSTRATING THE SUPERNATURAL

Stories Illustrating Supernatural Aid Granted to the Unfortunate —Stories Illustrating Supernatural Good Luck—Stories Illustrating Shamanism

KNOWLEDGE of the contact between supernatural and 538
human beings is based largely upon tales describing 787*
such incidents; in fact, generalizations like those made in the last chapter are, as has been already stated, contrary to Bella Coola practice. Such tales are, however, so numerous and so long that their inclusion in the sections describing the kind of experience they illustrate would have made the last chapter unduly cumbersome and confusing. Stories recounting three types of contact with the supernatural are brought together here, not as items of folk-lore, but as basic material to supplement the relevant sections of the last chapter. These legends are not family property, but are considered to be [424]
historical incidents which can be related by anyone.

Stories Illustrating Supernatural Aid Granted to the Unfortunate

THE GAMBLER'S SUCCESS

Four brothers, of whom the youngest was named *Djusdju·sa*, were 525
very fond of gambling with crabapple sticks. They played on all occa- 539*
sions, but with such lack of success that they lost first their goods, then
their houses, their mother, their children, their wives, and finally them- 787*
selves. The three older men went hunting every day, but *Djusdju·sa* remained in the house as if he had no heart to do more than lie down and die. Perhaps he had an inspiration; at any rate he was deceiving his brothers, because as soon as they had gone out he used to get up and collect clams which were plentiful below the floor of the house. These were his sole sustenance, but he also chewed the fin of an old salmon, which served to exercise his jaws. Before his brothers' return *Djusdju·sa* always lay down in his corner, covered with an old dirty blanket, as if he

525 were about to die. During the day he spent much of his time aimlessly
+539 making miniature wooden darts and circles of pliant wood, such as are
+539 used in a game, and idly tossing these around. One day when he was so
*787 engaged he heard someone come to the door, and looking up he saw
a strange man.

"A *wina*[3] is coming to *Djusdju·sa*," said the stranger.

"Come in," replied *Djusdju·sa*.

The stranger was a supernatural being, though whether *Djusdju·sa* was at once aware of this is doubtful.

"What do you bet?" asked the stranger, assuming that they would play with the darts and hoops which *Djusdju·sa* held in his hands.

"Alas, I have nothing," said the miserable man, though all his gambling instincts were aroused. "All I own in the world is a dried salmon fin which I use to chew on; I can barely keep alive with that and clams."

"Come on," said the supernatural stranger; "I will wager this pair of decorated moccasins against your salmon fin."

They gambled and *Djusdju·sa* won.

The loser handed over the moccasins, saying, "Go down to the beach and put just the toes of these shoes into the ocean."

Then he disappeared.

Djusdju·sa placed the toes in the water, and instantly the sea was filled with small herring-like fish called *ʾmūn·i*. *Djusdju·sa* caught and devoured as many of these as he wanted, but he did not clean himself, nor did he tell his brothers of his good fortune on their return.

Next day the supernatural stranger again appeared, offering to wager another pair of shoes against one of the hoops which *Djusdju·sa* had made. Once more the lad was victorious, receiving a pair of moccasins which, when dipped in the sea, brought countless spring salmon. The following day he won a pair which attracted the sockeye salmon, and on successive days ones to bring other species of salmon, until he was able to attract every kind. Finally, during his brothers' absence one day, *Djusdju·sa*, throwing off his disguise of lethargy, filled the house with all kinds of salmon. Great was the surprise of the hunters on their return; they asked him if he had become endowed with supernatural power, and he replied that he had. In exchange for being taught to gamble with crab-apple sticks, the supernatural one had so cleansed *Djusdju·sa*'s eyes that he could see where the king-stick[4] was concealed; hence he would be able to win on all occasions.

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[3] *Wina*, the term used for a raiding-party, is also applied to a contest in any game of skill, especially one in which teams or individuals from different villages take part.

[4] This is a marked stick and the players guess in whose hand it is concealed.

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One day the supernatural one appeared, asking *Djaodjie oe* to prepare a large number of the sticks and rings and be ready to follow him on the morrow. *Djaodjie oe* complied and the next day set off with his benefactor. They followed a well-worn trail, but one which *Djaodjie oe* had never seen, although he had lived all his life in the vicinity.

"You must follow me carefully," said the supernatural one, "and watch especially when I disappear."

Before long *Djaodjie oe* saw a man with a big hat sitting at the side of the road beneath the shelter of a huge cedar.

"You are going to a very dangerous place," said the man, "but nothing will harm you if you are bold. Soon you will reach a stream with four boulders projecting above the water; jump across in four leaps from stone to stone and you will be all right, but if you slip, or if you put your foot on the river-bottom, you will die."

The trail led across a stream at the bottom of a canyon. The supernatural one crossed without delay and *Djaodjie oe* saw that there were four boulders rising from the surface of the water. Remembering the instructions, he jumped from stone to stone, nor, until he looked back from the farther shore, did he realize that what had seemed to be stones were really the heads of four *sisiutl* which would have devoured him if he had slipped.

The supernatural one had waited on the farther shore to guide him to his own house, the Sun, where he accepted the sticks and rings which *Djaodjie oe* had been carrying. After spending a few days with his benefactor, *Djaodjie oe* returned home, where he built a new village and in time became wealthy owing to the salmon which he was able to catch by means of his supernatural shoes.

THE LAD WHO WAS HELPED BY MOUNTAIN GOAT

During a famine long ago, a certain family was on the verge of starvation. One of the sons set out with his bow and arrows, and near a waterfall on the south side of North Bentinck Arm, not far from its head, he saw a pure white bird, something like a gull, only much smaller. He shot at it but missed. It went only a short distance away, and the hunter shot again, unsuccessfully. The bird led him on for some distance; then it turned into a goat. More eagerly than before the boy discharged his arrow, but the animal was unharmed. Following his quarry, he presently found himself within the goat's house, where all the animals were seated according to rank, from the ground-hog at the bottom to the porcupine at the top. In accordance with the knowledge of the latter's rank gained on this occasion, men have since called Porcupine, *Chief*. [825]

#539 #787 [825] ma"ha, "The Eldest," and have spoken of him as the oldest of all animals. His goat-guide said:

"I am going to help you on account of your woes. Henceforth you will be able to see the smoke rising from the houses of the different animals."[5]

Thanks to the assistance thus vouchsafed to him, the lad was able to save his family from starvation.

THE FORTUNATE GLUTTON[6]

About four generations ago there was living in Bella Coola a young man who had a prodigious appetite. He used to eat everything, including vast quantities of rotten salmon eggs and other putrid foods until arms, face, and stomach all became fat, oily, and flabby, and he gave off an offensive smell. He was a chief and had married a chief's daughter, but she left him because of his grease and stench. Then he took another girl, who in turn deserted him. His parents arranged for him one marriage after another until he had become the husband of every available chief's daughter, but not one would stay with him because of his objectionable odour. Finally he wedded a poor girl who alone remained faithful and bore him a child. The glutton determined to improve his appearance. Accordingly, he obtained a large quantity of mountain goat grease and eagle feathers; then, taking these with him, he left the village and his family without saying where he was going, in fact, he did not know himself.

He went up the west bank of the Necleetsconnay River until it became a mere brook, then crossed over and returned down the east bank, strewing his path with eagle feathers. Then he went up the north bank of the Bella Coola River, penetrating every affluent coming from the north; in each case he went up the west bank, crossed the stream when it had become a rivulet and descended on the east side, all the time leaving behind him a trail of eagle feathers, and all the time eating nothing but the goat grease which he carried with him. When he had penetrated far into the upper reaches of the Bella Coola River, he crossed it and descended its south bank, investigating all tributaries as before. Near the Whitewater he heard a number of young girls singing happily, and a little below this place he came to his own village.

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[5] As every Bella Coola knows, the animals appear in beast form to mortals only. They really have their own houses, dances, and other forms of activity in which they partake in human shape. Any one who is fortunate enough to obtain supernatural aid enabling him to see the smoke from their houses can easily locate them, and thus have phenomenal success in hunting. [224]

[6] For another version of this story see Boas, p. 108.

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According to his usual practice he did not enter it but went up the creek behind, which flowed into the main Bella Coola at this point. Presently, he came to a clear pool, caused by a spring, immediately above which rose a crag about twenty feet high. Here, where the pond on one side and the rock on the other prevented him from hiding, he met a stranger. This was a supernatural being in the form of a handsome man with a fine-featured face, long, glistening hair, and a well-formed body which radiated beauty.

"I am what you have been seeking," said he. "It is the fault of your own gluttony that you have been having trouble with your wives. Come to the pool."

It was clear as a mirror. The supernatural one told the fat man to bend down, take up water in his hand, and to drink until his stomach was stretched. When he had done so, the stranger struck him several blows on the back and out gushed masses of putrid food. This was repeated several times.

"Just look at that filth," said his friend. "That is why you have had troubles."

The glutton looked at himself in the water, comparing his reflection with the radiantly beautiful being who was helping him, and expressed a desire to be handsomer. The supernatural one agreed to grant his request, and told him to shut his eyes. This done, he began to wash and massage the glutton, starting at his head and working downwards; when he had finished there was a marked improvement. The rubbing was repeated several times, and after each treatment the man saw himself becoming better looking until all that was lacking to make him as handsome as his supernatural friend was long hair. The mysterious one washed and rubbed his hair until it grew down to his hips; he was now a model of beauty. Then his benefactor said to him:

"Go and sit on that high rock over there. All those girls whom you heard laughing down in the valley will soon be passing, and they will all fall in love with you. But you must have nothing to do with any but the wife who was faithful to you in the days when you were ugly and objectionable. Your name henceforth shall be *Xolāxwosem*."

After giving these instructions the stranger disappeared.

The transformed man seated himself on the crag and presently one of his fellow-villagers came along without recognizing him. In answer to his question, the friend replied that the people were going up the small valley.

Soon the villagers began to pass, and as the supernatural one had foretold, all the girls fell in love with the handsome youth seated on the rock. He would have nothing to do with any of them, and did not reveal

539 his identity until, last of all, came his faithful wife with their child. He
*787 returned to her and in the course of time became wealthy.

THE GOOD FORTUNE OF *T̓saixlitl*

Long, long ago, there lived at Kimsquit a very successful hunter whose name was *T̓saixlitl*. One day, during a great famine, he went into the mountains carrying, like all hunters, a walking-stick about eight feet long.[8] *T̓saixlitl* met *Twalällit*, the supernatural hunter, who like himself was carrying a stick and was accompanied by a dog. *Twalällit* greeted him: [224]

"I hereby give you good fortune. Let us exchange sticks. Do not hunt until tomorrow, then make the motion of hurling my staff at mountain goats and they will fall dead."

"I am delighted," *T̓saixlitl* replied. *Twalällit* continued:

"I must give you some instructions. When you leave this spot do not go either up or down; keep on the same level around the mountain. When you hunt tomorrow, first kill a porcupine, because he is the oldest of all animals. If you fail to do so, you will lose your power."

Then *Twalällit* vanished, and *T̓saixlitl* moved on, taking care neither to go up or down. Presently the spot on which he had been standing fell away in a landslide, such as is caused only by *Twalällit* or a *susiutl*. Famous hunters have sometimes seen *Twalällit*'s stick moving, or the impressions of it on the ground, and from these visions have gained extraordinary ability to see goats; but *T̓saixlitl* alone obtained supernatural good fortune from this hunter, owing to the stick given to him. The exchange was of equal value to *Twalällit*, since the staff which he obtained was as potent among supernatural beings as his among mortals. *T̓saixlitl* was especially lucky, obtaining, as he did, supernatural good fortune on two separate occasions. [224]

When he returned home he concealed the stick in a tree, though there was really no need for doing so, because, as a supernatural possession, it was invisible to ordinary mortals. He did not tell his wife what had happened to him, and she was very angry at him when, for a whole year, he did not hunt to provide his family with food; this was because he remembered that to the supernatural ones "tomorrow" means "next year." It was a time of famine, and the family of *T̓saixlitl* was saved from starvation only by the food which he had stored up previously. When a year had elapsed he went hunting, spending four days in procuring a porcupine before pursuing other game. His success was prodigious, in fact but for his efforts the whole village would have been blotted out by starvation.[8] His fame was so great that many people brought their infant daughters to him as wives. 539 *

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[8] Made of hemlock, spruce, or fir, never of cedar.

Ṫsaixlitl had a brother and a sister. The former, whose name was *Stuux*, was driven by famine to *Ḱisiqwatl* in the country of the *ustämx* people below Kimsquit. Here he, too, obtained supernatural good fortune from *Twalällit*, in exactly the same way as his brother, and like him saved the whole population from starvation. The sister had been married to a Bella Coola, by whom she had two daughters. When one of them, a girl about fifteen years old, had starved to death, the people determined to abandon their village and seek refuge with *Stuux* among the *ustämx*. On the way there, they camped on the shore of Labouchere Channel, where the remaining daughter was bitten on the arm by a pack-rat, as she lay sleeping beside her mother in a cave. Weakened by lack of food the mother died, and her husband abandoned her corpse and his injured daughter. Some time later a party of Bella Coola chanced to land at the same spot, found the deserted girl still alive, and carried her to her mother's brother, who looked after her. Though angry at his sister's husband, he did not wish to start a feud; to have done so would have grieved his niece, as well as have shown disrespect for the man his dead sister had loved. 787 *

During the four years that the famine lasted no berries ripened and there was a universal lack of food of every kind. Soon after it had ended, *Ṫsaixlitl* went to the Bella Coola town of *Älqüläxl* to obtain a second wife. He married a young woman, but for almost a year neither slept with her nor went hunting, omissions which so angered her mother that she chided him one day for his failure to carry on his previous occupation. Annoyed by her criticism, *Ṫsaixlitl* left the house. Several of those who had heard her upbraided the old woman for speaking harshly to the famous hunter and her daughter joined in the chorus of disapproval. Although it was winter, *Ṫsaixlitl* caught four geese which he carried home, using his blanket as a pack, and dumped them on the floor before his mother-in-law without saying a word. She fell dead instantly; the sudden start had caused the spirit to leave her body. *Ṫsaixlitl* might have used the stick obtained from *Twalällit*, which had in it the power of life and death, but instead he had merely used the accumulated power which was his through long continence. In fact he never disclosed the power of his stick.

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[8] The method of hunting introduced by *Tsaixlitl* has since been employed by all wise hunters. Whenever a porcupine is seen the observer kills it, saying:

"Please, may your younger brothers and sisters come."

A man always tries to kill a porcupine when he starts on a hunting trip, and if one should appear when he is stalking bigger game he will stop to kill it, knowing that the time so spent will not be wasted.

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The woman's husband was not dismayed at her death, knowing she deserved it on account of having spoken harshly to her son-in-law. This was the only occasion on which *Ŧsaixlitl* killed anyone. After the funeral he said to his father-in-law:

"I am sorry for what has happened. If I had intended to slay your wife I should have done so by means of my supernatural power, whereas her death was caused accidentally by the too-great force latent in my own body."

"Do not let this event trouble you," the other man replied. "We all realize that my wife was in the wrong and thus caused her own death. I will take a new wife from among your relatives, and there the matter will drop."

A year later the marriage took place and the death of *Ŧsaixlitl*'s mother-in-law was thus amicably settled.[7]

THE GOOD FORTUNE OF *Yelhal·a*

Yelhal·a was very poor. He hunted diligently but was never successful, and the people of the village used to laugh at him. When feasts were given, *Yelhal·a* received a share, but he was never able to reciprocate, and this preyed on his mind. One day he set out at dawn for the mountains with his stick and his dog, but though he hunted industriously he returned at night with nothing better than herbs to cook for his supper. Undaunted, he set off again the following day, but had no better success, and again brought back only vegetables for his evening meal. He placed these on a stick before the fire to dry, and lay down, weary and depressed. Presently he saw a man enter the house and stand on the other side of the fire; around his head he wore a snake, which stamped him as a shaman. It was *Twalällit*, but *Yelhal·a* did not know this.

"*Yelhal·a*, what are you cooking?" asked the visitor.

"Mountain goat liver," he lied in answer.

Twalällit next inquired, "Is your dog a good mountain goat dog?"

"Yes," replied *Yelhal·a*, untruthfully. "Every day he goes hunting he kills twenty mountain goats."

"Is your stick a good one?" inquired *Twalällit*.

"Yes," answered *Yelhal·a*, "I always kill a great many mountain goats with it."

Twalällit then suggested that they exchange dogs and sticks. *Yelhal·a*, though at first unwilling, at length consented, and his visitor went away, leaving his own staff and dog behind.

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[7] The above is regarded as an historical account, and the descendants of those who figure in the story consider that they have prior rights to relate it. But as it has no ceremonial significance, this claim is not pressed.

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The next day *Yelhal·a* went hunting with his new equipment. As soon as he had reached the mountains he sent the dog after goats, though none were in sight; but as the animal ran around, dead mountain goats lay on the ground, though there was no sign of what had killed them. Without taking aim, the hunter cast his stick down a hillside, but it found and killed a goat. *Yelhal·a* was overjoyed. He cut off the hind-quarters of one of the animals and carried it home. The people in the village laughed even more than usual at his early return.

"Did you kill any goats?" they asked.

"Yes," replied *Yelhal·a*.

No one believed him until he showed the hind-quarters which he had brought back, and when he told them that there were many more where he had killed them, they again thought he was lying. Next day he persuaded a number of men to go with him to carry in the game, and they were amazed when they saw how many goats he had slain. Thanks to the dog and stick which *Twalällit* had given him, *Yelhal·a* continued to have remarkable success as a hunter, and in time became so rich that he made himself a chief.

THE TWO UGLY BROTHERS

Once upon a time there were two brothers who were very ugly. Without consulting them, their old mother did her utmost to arrange satisfactory marriages for her sons, but wife after wife left, owing to the husbands' ugliness and disagreeable temper. Among others, each brother had married an ugly wife who had borne him a child. The two ugly wives loved their husbands, though their affection was not reciprocated; on the contrary, both brothers desired only the pretty women who scorned them.

Discouraged and wearied of life, the younger set off one day, neither knowing nor caring where he was going. After travelling for some distance he came to a house occupied by an old woman who called him in.

"Be brave," she said. "There is great danger where you are going, but if you heed my advice you will come to no harm. You will see two houses, in each of which you will hear a woman singing. One song will be, '*Ḳaina, Ḳaina, Ḳaina,*' the other, '*Ḳai·na, Ḳai·na, Ḳai·na.*' Go into the house where you hear the latter, but not the first, for the woman who sings '*Ḳaina, Ḳaina, Ḳaina,*' is very evil."

The younger brother continued his journey until he came to the two houses. Listening attentively, he heard the two songs exactly as the old woman had described and, remembering her advice, he entered the one from which he heard the song, "*Ḳai·na, Ḳai·na, Ḳai·na.*" The singer greeted him.

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"I know why you have come," she said. "You have had trouble with your wives, I will be your friend and help you."

Much to his delight she massaged his face, arms, and body until he became beautiful.

"Now go home," said his benefactress. "All the women who divorced you on account of your ugliness will now desire you, but you must treat them with scorn, as they treated you in the time of your misfortune. Only cherish the ugly woman who loved you and bore you a child."

When he returned home the younger brother found that it was as the supernatural woman had foretold. Though all the pretty women who had previously repudiated him now sought him, he cared nothing for them; the ugly one alone appealed to him now, her lack of beauty was of no consequence.

The elder brother now desired to become as handsome as the younger. With this aim in view he took the same road and met the old woman who gave him the same advice. But he, arrogant and foolhardy, forgot which house he was to enter and when he came to the two from which he heard songs issuing, peered into each. The woman who was singing "*Ḳaina, Ḳaina, Ḳaina*" was very beautiful, whereas the singer of "*Ḳai·na, Ḳai·na Ḳai·na*" was ugly, so he went into the former's house.

"Will you make me beautiful, please?" he asked.

"Yes," replied the beautiful woman.

With that she seized his genital organs, which parted from his body at her grasp and fixed them to his forehead, the penis projecting like a horn from his brow, and the testicles hanging down over his face. Deaf to his appeals, the woman would do no more. Realizing at last that she would not help him, the unfortunate man left her, concealing his shame by wrapping a blanket around his face. His mortification was almost more than he could stand.

When he reached home he lay down with his head covered, as if very ill, nor for days did he leave the house except when necessary. No one could discover what was the nature of his trouble, until finally his younger brother investigated and found out the reason. Thanks to the massage which he had received from the supernatural woman he had her ability to transform the human body. Accordingly he exercised his power to replace his brother's organs, and to make him handsome, even as he himself. Then the women who had divorced him in the days of his ugliness wished to return to him, but he followed his brother's example, cherishing only the ugly woman who had borne him a child.

THE MAN WHO MARRIED A COPPER WIFE

Tcinutliax was a lad whose parents had been murdered by evil people. He lived with his mother's mother, a woman so old that she could neither see nor walk. *Tcinutliax* himself was not only poor but he was so weak that the other lads used to bully him and would never condescend to play with him. In the midst of his misfortunes he became endowed with supernatural power.

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He said to his grandmother, "Grandmother, please come to me, I want to cure you."

The old woman thought that he was mocking her and struck him so that he began to cry.

"You little brat," she said, "I am old and helpless, you should be ashamed of making fun of me."

But when he had stopped crying he again told her he would cure her and this time she consented. He rubbed his hands over her legs, holding his palms together and spitting in them and again passing them over her, as is done by healers. Then he stroked his grandmother's eyes, spitting and blowing on his hands at intervals, until she found she could see.

Finally *Tcinutliax* said, "Stand up."

For years she had not been able to rise but now she found that she could walk easily; she had been cured. It was *Älquntäm* who had taken pity on the lad's misfortunes and had granted him supernatural aid.

A few days later, when a large number of lads were playing on a level tract near the village, something seemed to draw their eyes upwards and they saw a bright object floating down from the sun. They watched eagerly until, when it drew near the earth, they saw that it was a shining woman whose clothing was composed entirely of copper. She did not descend to the ground, but remained drifting slowly around at a height of about twenty feet. They all knew, in some inexplicable manner, that if anyone could hit her with a stone she would be his wife. All tried, but none could strike the gleaming maiden. Then *Tcinutliax* came along and, making fun of him as usual, the others called on him to try; his first shot whizzed close past her, his second struck her fairly, and she fell with a crash at his feet.

One of the lads went to the old woman's house, saying, "Your grandson has won the wonderful woman, clean up your house."

But she did not believe the news.

"You are always beating *Tcinutliax* when you play," she answered. "It is bad enough for you to abuse my grandson, don't try any of your tricks on me."

Finally she was convinced and cleaned up the house, scattering sand

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on the floor as is done whenever a supernatural visitor is expected. *Tcinutliax* entered with his copper bride.

Although no one gave him presents, *Tcinutliax*'s goods increased in a miraculous way. He would leave two blankets in his house and on his return there would be ten, and the same with other goods. He was able to give potlatches, thus wiping away his poverty and making himself a chief. In the course of time he learnt who had murdered his parents and determined to avenge their deaths.

One day he said to his grandmother, "I am going to lie down with my wife. No matter what happens you must not disturb us."

The old woman promised to follow his instructions and *Tcinutliax* disappeared with his copper wife into the bedroom.

Shortly afterwards one of the murderers of his father was drawing water when an immense eagle swooped down and carried him away, to the amazement and consternation of the people. This increased when a second bird dropped like a plummet on another man, bearing him aloft. Eagle after eagle swooped down, each taking one victim, until half the population of the village had been seized. *Tcinutliax*'s grandmother, realizing that he was responsible for the plague of eagles, was greatly worried; she believed that if she called him the attacks would stop, but she feared to break her promise. At last she summoned up the necessary courage to do so, telling him what was happening.

"Didn't I tell you not to disturb us under any circumstances?" he angrily retorted.

The grandmother drew back, fearing that *Tcinutliax* would strike her as he followed her from the bedroom. He did not do so, but no more eagles appeared as she had broken his power.

THE MAN WHO MARRIED WOLF[8]

Once a man was walking in the forest when he met the daughter of Wolf. Each felt a mutual attraction for the other so that he accompanied the woman, who was in human form at the time, to her father's house where they were presently married.

"Mortal," said Wolf to his son-in-law, "if you are wise you will take very great care of your wife. Never slight[9] her."

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[8] Boas, p. 103, has recorded a myth having many points of similarity with this.

[9] He used the word *qopal*, which means literally, "to be in smoke," i.e., he told him, "Never allow smoke to drift over her." Considerable smoke often rose from the open fire of a Bella Coola house, hence the literal translation of his command meant that the woman must never be seated where the draught would blow smoke over her. Of course, the real significance was never to allow anything to impinge on the respect due to his wife.

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The man lived for some time in the home of his father-in-law where his wife bore him a sturdy son. When the infant had grown with phenomenal rapidity into a fine lad—it seemed as if he were about two years old though he was only a few months—his father took him and his wife to his own parents' home. His mother and father welcomed their daughter-in-law, and heeded the injunction that she was in some way peculiar and must never be slighted. He for his part faithfully obeyed his wife's wishes that he must never even exchange pleasantries with any other woman: she was very jealous. Previous to wedding Wolf's daughter, the man had been married several times, but he had divorced his former wives. One of them, however, still had affection for him, and when they met at the river bank one day, where each was drawing water, he exchanged a few playful remarks with her. Although he did not tell his wife what he had done she soon learnt of it.

"My father told you never to slight me," she called out in anger.

Then she took the child and lay down with him in the bedroom, nor could the distressed husband do anything to mollify her.

He did not know that the bucket and a skin cord which his wife had brought with her from her home were in reality spies on his behaviour. She always carried the thong concealed beneath her arm-pit, and when her husband brought water to the house she would drop the cord into it. Hitherto it had remained limp, but on this occasion it had curled up like a spring, thus conveying knowledge of her husband's actions.

When the man went to bed that evening he again tried to pacify his wife, but as she remained as angry as before he realized that it was a serious matter and determined to lie awake in case she should try to flee. Towards dawn, forgetting his resolution, he slumbered. Then the woman rose silently and slipped away, taking the child with her.

In the morning when the man awoke he at once felt for his wife, but she was not beside him. Fearfully, he searched the house and village, but all in vain. Wife and child had gone, leaving him filled with woe and anger, coupled with self-humiliation. Then it occurred to him that his wife had fled to her father's home and he determined to follow. Without delay he set out, cheered at intervals by his son's small footprints. Presently his path was blocked by a steep, treeless mountain which had not been there when he last traversed the road. He scoured in either direction in search of tracks, but without avail; it seemed as if they had vanished at the base of the mountain, and the man sat down and began to cry. Presently a stranger appeared; he was Lynx, in human form.

"Why are you crying?" said Lynx. "Have you lost your wife and your child?"

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"Yes," answered the man, too grief-stricken to be surprised at the other's knowledge of his misfortunes.

"That is nothing serious," continued Lynx, "they are not far away."

With that Lynx made an opening through which the man hurried. Inside the mountain he found himself in a new land, not dissimilar to Bella Coola, with a sun above and a river flowing through it. Best of all, as he hurried up the river bank, he saw his son's tracks at intervals. At length he came to a lake at the margin of which the footsteps seemed to vanish; once more disappointed, the man scoured the shore in either direction, but not a trace could he find. At last, concluding that his wife and child must have gone into the lake itself, he determined to follow, and walked in until the water reached his neck. He drew back in fear and sat down to cry, convinced that his task was hopeless. Once more a strange man appeared; this time it was Muskrat, who asked the same question as Lynx had done, and who likewise stated that wife and child were not far away.

Then Muskrat opened a path for the man beneath the water where he found himself in another world, with its sun and its river, again not unlike Bella Coola. As before, his son's tracks were visible here and there serving to guide the father. At last he was overjoyed to see smoke rising from a solitary house occupied by an old woman.

"Have you seen any strangers?" inquired the man.

"Why, yes," answered the woman, "a woman carrying an infant passed not long ago."

"That was my wife with my baby," cried the excited man.

The old woman told him that they were staying at a house not far from her own, though out of sight. Towards dusk he hid himself near the door and when his son came toddling out, the father seized him eagerly. The child, who was very fond of his father, was delighted to see him.

"Now listen carefully," the father told him. "When it gets dark I want you to say that you need to leave the house. Perhaps your mother will take you out, but if she tries to send someone else out with you, you start crying. Don't go out with anyone but her."

The little boy, vaguely realizing the importance of the command, promised to obey.

When it had grown dark the child called out that he wanted to go outside. His mother tried to send him with an old woman, but he began to cry. Then she asked one of her sisters to take him, but he only wept the more, until at last she took him herself, though perhaps she was a little suspicious that her husband might be in waiting. No sooner was she in the open than the watcher seized and embraced her. She apparently considered that his pursuit atoned for his folly, at any rate, instead of being angry, she took him into the house, where he was received courteously by his wife's relatives. For a long time the man lived happily with her in her village.

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One day a large party, including the man, his wife, and several of her sisters, went on a visit to a neighbouring village. All his wife's sisters were very beautiful, but one of them, the most lovely of all, had fallen violently in love with her brother-in-law and had tried to seduce him whenever his wife was absent. For a long time he resisted, but on this occasion he yielded. As soon as his wife returned she knew what had happened.

"Did not my father say you must never slight me?" she burst out angrily.

While her husband was seeking some plausible excuse his wife seized the child and fled away, nor was her husband ever able to catch her.

THE MAN WHO MARRIED WOLF

(*Second Version*)

Long ago there was a young man who lost his wives, his house, and all his possessions through gambling at the game played with crabapple sticks. His father, becoming disgusted at his son's folly, determined to move away and abandon him to starvation. Following the father's instructions, the villagers collected all the food and all the blankets, took down the plank walls of the houses, and departed, leaving the young man alone. Only an old slave woman took pity on him by secreting some embers in a large shell which she concealed and told him where to find.

Abandoned by his friends, the young man was soon in difficulties. He blew the embers into a fire which he kept blazing, but he could obtain no food until finally he was reduced to a skeleton and lay down to die, covered with moss. As he lay there he heard in the distance a woman's voice, *a*······.

He thought to himself, "Well, that can be no mortal. If she comes to me, I will die, but as I am to die anyway it does not matter," so he lay inert.

The voice kept sounding, always nearer and nearer, till presently he saw a beautiful woman with two long braids of hair and two blankets.

"My father has sent me to you," she said to him. "He has seen your misery. I am to help you."

Though he did not know it, the woman was Wolf. She had brought with her some mountain goat grease which she chewed, then spat out into her hands, with which she proceeded to massage the dying man from head to foot. After the first application he felt better and she told him to get

*539 *787 up. But he realized that she was bringing him supernatural strength and resolved to obtain as much of this as possible. Accordingly he said he was too weak to rise, and again she massaged him. She repeated this several times; each time the man felt he was gaining more and more strength, until finally he consented to get up.

The woman now asked him to go home with her, which he did. It was winter and they had to use snow-shoes; there was only one pair available but they had no trouble travelling on these, each placing a foot on each shoe. When they reached Wolf's house the old man, the woman's father, welcomed them and showed his pleasure by insisting that the young man marry his daughter; this he was only too ready to do. The youth taught his father-in-law the gambling game which had been the cause of his own downfall, and the old man was so delighted that he gave his daughter's husband supernatural power to succeed at it. The youth lived for some time in Wolf's house, when presently his wife bore a son who grew with such phenomenal rapidity that in a few months he was like a child of two. After a time the husband wanted to return to his old home and broached the subject to his wife and her father. They were willing, but Wolf told his son-in-law that he must never allow smoke to drift over his wife. The youth, puzzled at this injunction, asked for further information; his father-in-law told him that if he paid attention to any other woman it would be as if his wife were sitting in smoke, and that disaster would follow. He added that she would have means of knowing whether or not he obeyed this command.

With his wife and child the man returned to his old home where again he began to gamble. But now his luck was unfailing. As he had been unfortunate before, so now was he fortunate until he had won more than he had lost and filled his house with food, goods, and slaves. He always remembered his father-in-law's instructions and took great care of his wife, even acting as her servant, in that he drew water for her in a bark bucket. But one day as he was doing this he met a former wife, now a slave, who was accompanied by a favourite dog. The animal gambolled over to him and his old master petted and made much of it. Whenever he returned with water his wife always dropped in the bucket a piece of mountain goat sinew which had the power of curling if he had shown affection for anyone during his absence from her; up to this time the thong had always remained straight, but now it rolled itself tightly, and the wolf woman knew that her husband had allowed smoke to drift over her.

She upbraided him, "Did not my father tell you never to allow smoke to drift over me? Why have you been so foolish?"

The son, who was just learning to talk, joined in his mother's chidings

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and the father was speechless. The woman refused to drink the water, but threw it out of the door and fled away to her father's house.

The heart-broken man determined to follow. Sometimes her track led under lakes, but he pushed on bravely until at last he drew near Wolf's village, at the lower end of which there was a single house occupied by an old man.

"Have you seen my wife and child?" the husband asked.

"Yes," answered the man, "she arrived home several days ago. She is afraid you will pursue her and, therefore, remains inside most of the time, but the boy plays fearlessly. Wait here and you will probably see him."

In a short while the child drew near and the father rushed out and seized him. He was very pleased to see his father, and the latter conceived a plan to use his son as a means for catching his wife.

He said to the boy, "Tonight, when everyone is in the house, you must say that you want to go outside. Your mother will probably try to send you out with someone else but you must cry until she consents to take you herself."

The son agreed. That night the child said that he wanted to leave the house and cried and cried until his mother took him out, though she told her relatives that she was afraid her husband might be watching for her.

As soon as the woman was clear of the house her husband seized her and embraced her. Convinced of his love, she was not angry, but instead took him back with her into the house. He remained with her in Wolf's village, became a real wolf himself, and never more returned to the land of mortals.

THE ORPHAN HUNTER

Kaldcap and his sister, two Carrier Indians, were orphans, alone in the world. Though *Kaldcap* was little more than a boy he took great care of his sister and hunted assiduously for her with bow and arrow, killing many squirrels, rabbits, and mallard ducks. The first two he skinned, so that his sister could make blankets from their fur, while the ducks were used for food. He was very successful, but one day he broke his bow-string.

"Will you not give me some material to make a new one?" he asked his sister.

"What do you want?" she inquired.

"Some strands of pubic hair," replied *Kaldcap*.

His sister gave him some with which he made a string. Soon after-

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wards he met twelve grizzly bears, at a time when he carried twelve arrows. The bears said to one another:

"Let us kill that puny man."

When they began to uproot trees to show their strength, *Keldcap* replied:

"All right! Do your worst. I will kill you all."

He shot his arrows, shattering the trees behind which the grizzly bears were standing, and after a tremendous fight succeeded in killing them all. He returned to his sister and told her that he had killed twelve grizzly bears, but had almost lost his own life in doing it. She was much alarmed, and, fearing for his safety, asked him to abandon such dangerous hunting.

A few days later when he shot at a squirrel in a tree he missed it, and his arrow lodged far above the ground. *Keldcap* climbed after it, and, as his eyes were always fixed on the arrow above him, he did not notice that the trunk was growing rapidly taller. Finally, the tree passed upward through a hole in the land above and *Keldcap* crossed to it, using his bow as a gangplank. He found himself in a fine, level, treeless country, containing game, at least so he judged from a well-defined runway which passed near the place where he stood. It was evening by this time, so *Keldcap* made a snare of his bow-string and set it in the path, hoping that the animal which had made it, whatever it might be, would be caught during the night. Then he lay down and slept.

Early the following morning he heard a low rumbling, and to his amazement he saw the sun heading straight for his snare. *Keldcap* thus realized that the runway was its path. He expected that his bow-string would be broken by the impact, but to his surprise the snare held and the sun was fairly caught. Its chief emerged from within and looked around without noticing the frightened lad who lay perfectly still.

"Who did this?" he demanded angrily, but *Keldcap* did not answer.

Presently the mice which are plentiful in the land above came to him and asked:

"Did you do this? It is a terrible thing, a great mistake which you must rectify."

"How?" inquired *Keldcap*.

"Cover our bodies with paint[19] and we will gnaw through the string of your noose."

Keldcap smeared the mice with paint, but when they tried to penetrate to the cord they were driven back by the intense heat.

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[19] It was formerly customary for all Bella Coola to carry small pouches containing paint.

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"You did not paint us all over," said the mice. "Do our eyes and our recta." 539 *

Kəldcap did so. Then the mice reached the string and gnawed it, freeing the sun to hurry off on its course. 787 *

"Never come here again," said the mice. "It is a bad place. No people ever come here."

Kəldcap, who was terribly frightened, was only too willing to follow their advice, so he extended his bow to the tree, which had remained in position, crossed to it, and began to descend. As he did so, the trunk rapidly became shorter until at length he reached the earth. His sister, who did not know what had become of him, was weeping at his long absence.

"I thought you were dead," she said to him.

"I have had a narrow escape," he answered, "I've been to the land above though I did not know it."

When he recounted his adventures, she was terrified at the dangers through which he had passed and again besought him not to go on any more such expeditions. Not long afterwards, when he wanted to hunt mallard ducks which were plentiful on a near-by lake, the sister insisted on accompanying him. On reaching the shore, he threw off his clothing and dived into the water to pursue the birds while she remained on the beach. After swimming a short distance, *Kəldcap*'s legs were seized by a *sįâmtsk* which dwelt in the lake. He was not swallowed immediately and retained sufficient presence of mind to call to his sister to throw him her long rope of caribou hide.[11] He caught one end and tied it round his stomach, directing her to fasten the other to a tree-trunk. Then he told her to throw him his stone knife, and with it he slew the monster. Inside the animal's stomach they found the bones of many people whom it had devoured. This adventure terrified *Kəldcap* as much as it did his sister, who pointed out to him that he would have perished but for her help. Thenceforth he abandoned hunting.

In spite of his good intentions, *Kəldcap* seemed fated to have adventures. One night, soon after his experience in the lake, he was sleeping in his camp on the brink of a precipitous canyon when he was awakened by someone shaking him.

"Get up!" He heard a voice say.

When he opened his eyes the only living creature in sight was a mouse which rapidly disappeared beneath a stone. *Kəldcap*, concluding that he must have been dreaming, again went to sleep. A second time he was aroused by being shaken, and a second time he heard the voice, but as before he could see no one. Determined to solve the mystery, he made a

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[11] All Carrier women are said to wear ropes of this kind.

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small hole in his skin blanket and once more lay down as if to sleep, but fixed his eye to the opening. Soon there drew near a beautiful woman with long hair.

"Don't vanish," *Kalávap* said to her. "I see you."

The woman, not at all perturbed at being seen, merely answered:

"Come to my house."

Kalávap followed his visitor, a mouse in human form, down under the earth to her home, a cave on the very edge of the precipice. One side of the house opened out into the canyon without a wall of any kind. Here the mouse-woman's three beautiful sisters were waiting.

"Let us play," said the mice. "Won't you swing us?"

[524] From the roof was suspended a swing consisting of two long ropes with a small cross-seat at the bottom, and a long rope by which it could be hauled back and forth, exactly like the swings formerly used by Bella Coola boys. One of the sisters took her place on the seat and *Kalávap* pulled her back and forth so that she swung far out into the canyon. Then another took her place, followed by the third and the fourth, until he had swung them all. Next they suggested that he take his turn. A second rope was attached to the seat, *Kalávap* took his place, and the four women, two on each side, pulled so strongly that he, in turn, swung far out into the canyon. Then the treacherous mice jerked the ropes violently, throwing him from the seat down into the depths.

Even as he was falling *Kalávap* retained sufficient presence of mind to thrust out his bow, in which his supernatural power was localized, and to which he had clung. It lodged in a cranny of the canyon wall, arresting his fall, and he, being small and light, succeeded in gaining a foothold on a rough path. He crawled up it to the surface of the ground at some little distance from the place where he had camped, but on the same side of the gorge. Full of anger, he made his way back to the house of the mice.

"Let's play some more," he said to them.

But the mice, amazed at seeing him alive, were afraid to trust themselves to his swinging, even though he promised that they should later have an opportunity of doing the same to him.

"No," they said. "Sometime we will allow you to return and play with us, and you can sleep with us if you like. You had better go home now."

Kalávap returned to his camp. When, the next day, he told his sister of his adventure she was terrified, and once more besought him to avoid all dangers.*

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[538] *Though in this case the hero outwitted scheming women, it is said that in many ancient stories the reverse was true.

THE ORPHAN HUNTER

(*Second Version*)

*Djachp** was a poor orphan boy who lived with and looked after his sister. Eager to be a hunter, he made a bow for himself and begged her to make a string for it. First she offered to braid it of cedar-bark, but he would have none of it, and, when he likewise refused to accept one of moss, she was in despair, saying that she had nothing more that she could use. Then *Djachp* persuaded her to give him some of her hair, which he twined into a bow-string. His sister told him never to shoot upwards, and he promised to obey her injunction. He was a fairly successful hunter, and killed a large number of squirrels whose skins his sister sewed into clothing for her brother and herself. 539 787

One day when *Djachp* was hunting he saw a black bear in a tree. It seemed an easy mark, so easy that he felt certain of success and quite forgot his sister's instructions not to shoot upwards. Already he seemed to see himself clad in a fine bear-skin cloak, and ripped his squirrel-skin covering to pieces in anticipation. He shot at the bear, but the arrow, missing its mark, lodged in the tree; again he tried with like result. As this exhausted his quiver, *Djachp* decided to climb after his arrows. Up he went, the bear clambering up and up above him, but he did not realize that the tree was growing rapidly, until, when he looked down, he saw, to his amazement, that the earth had disappeared from sight. After a moment's hesitation, he resolutely continued his climb. Finally the tree penetrated the floor of the land above, to which the hunter crawled with the aid of his bow.

Djachp found himself in a flat country where he wandered on until he reached four large runways, such as any large animal might have made. Presently he heard a far-off rumble, a light appeared in the distance, and the sun came roaring up one of the paths. The heat became intense, but as the sun disappeared, the temperature returned to normal. *Djachp* decided to set the string of his bow as a noose in one of the runways and, when he had done so, lay down to sleep.

Next morning he was awakened by the same distant rumbling; again the sun came near and was caught in his noose. As the heat was unbearable, *Djachp* tried to reach with his bow to pull away his loop, but was driven back by the warmth. Then a mouse came to his aid, which *Djachp* sent in to gnaw at the string, but the animal was roasted to death. He pulled it forth with his bow and revived it by sprinkling it with paint. Again he despatched the little creature, but a second time it was overcome

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*The name of the hero appears in different forms; it is probably a Carrier word incorrectly pronounced by the Bella Coola. [177]

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by the heat. This happened a third time, but on the fourth attempt the mouse succeeded in cutting the string, whereupon the sun went booming away.

The orphan walked along a good road until he came to a house from inside which he could hear women's voices and the sound of bark-beating. Peering in, he saw a number of women preparing soft bark coverings for an infant who was lying in a cradle-box; they were the supernatural cedar-bark beaters who live in the land above. When *Djaskip* walked in, they asked him whence he had come; he replied by inquiring why they were making bark cloths, and they answered that they were for a cradle. They told him to lie down in it, saying that it was so comfortable that he would soon fall asleep. Though *Djaskip* suspected that they were plotting against him, he felt so secure in his great power that he did as they asked. As soon as he had lost consciousness, the box rotated on its axis so that he was projected through the floor itself, down into the region between the upper land and this earth. After falling a short distance, *Djaskip* changed to eagle down and floated back up to the house, where he reappeared to the women in human form once more. They were amazed at seeing him again, but once more he obligingly went to sleep. Again the box rotated to cast him down below, and again he became eagle down and floated up. When this had happened four times, *Djaskip* became angry.

"I am a shaman," he said to the women, "and will kill you if you are not careful."

The supernatural bark beaters advised him to go back to his sister, telling him to return by the way he had come. He decided to follow their counsel, found the tree still in position and climbed down, the trunk growing shorter as he descended. In this way he reached home in safety.

In a third version, collected from another informant, the hero is named *Tsalkwap*. He is described as a lad who supported his sister on small game, while dreaming of the time when he would be a real hunter. He decided that a bow-string of pubic hair was necessary, and obtained the wherewithal to make one from his sister, after refusing to use any other kind of hair. The story relates how his arrow lodged in a tree-top, where he attempted to climb after it, ultimately reaching the land above. Parallel game trails crossed this territory, in one of which he set his bow-string as a noose and in this way snared the sun. After a mouse had released the captive *Tsalkwap* returned to earth.

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This account states that each parallel trail was the track of the sun on a successive day and that after being captured the sun retraced its course. This is said to be the origin of the solstices. 539, 787, [821]

There are many other versions of this tale current in Bella Coola, in some of which the hero is said to have been a native of Green Bay.

THE BOY WHO WAS BEFRIENDED BY GRIZZLY BEAR

The youths of a certain village were very fond of wrestling, spending most of their time in bouts. Proud of their strength, they used to unite to bully one of their fellows, a weakly youngster quite unable to hold his own amongst his more vigorous companions; they not only mocked his lack of strength, but, when wrestling, threw him around as if he were a plaything. For a long time the lad remained passive under the taunts and ill-treatment of his companions, then determined to seek supernatural aid. Adorning himself with eagle down, dyed cedar-bark and undyed cedar-bark, he made his way to a small pool up the valley, where he knew that grizzly bears were in the habit of washing. For four days he lay down by the water, without sleeping or eating. At last he saw a bear approaching, but, strengthened by his fast, he showed no sign of fear.

"You have come to obtain power from me," said Grizzly Bear.

"Yes," answered the boy.

"Very well."

Grizzly Bear washed the lad in the pool, and as the creature passed his hands over him, the youth felt an increase in strength. There was a large boulder near the edge of the pond, one which the bears used to toss around when playing.

"Throw me that rock," said the bear, wishing to see how strong the lad had become.

But the latter, though strong enough to throw it, determined to plead weakness with the intention of obtaining greater strength by more washings. In this he succeeded. When he pretended to try to lift the stone, but failed to do so, Grizzly Bear again washed him, and again he felt increasing vigour.

"Try now," said Grizzly Bear.

A second time the boy pretended that it was too heavy for him.

"Pshaw!" said Grizzly Bear. "If you had any mental courage you would be able to throw it as I do."

As he said this he tossed the boulder a considerable distance as though it had been a pebble.

Nevertheless he consented to wash the youth a third time and even, when again he failed to lift the stone, a fourth time. Now the lad decided that he had obtained as much strength as he could, so he picked up the

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boulder and tossed it lightly, even farther than Grizzly Bear himself had been able to do.

"Now," said Grizzly Bear, "go home. But don't display your prowess immediately. If they start to handle you roughly as before, just pretend still to be weak, and watch who are your chief tormentors. Then, if they anger you too much, exert your strength."

When the youth returned to his village his companions, who knew of his search for supernatural aid, came running out.

"Here comes so-and-so," they said, "who went away to get power."

They were all eager to learn whether or not he had succeeded, but the lad did not gratify their curiosity. After a time they began their usual sport of wrestling, nor was it long before they had begun to throw their playmate to and fro, as they had often done. He allowed them to believe him a weakling until the whole crowd jumped on him, forcing him to the ground, and deriding him for his failure to obtain supernatural help. Then he exerted his strength. Catching one of his persecutors by the neck he squeezed him until his head was separated from his body; next he seized two, one in each hand, and crushed them together with such a shock that they were killed. Grizzly Bear had endowed him with the strength of a bear, which he used to slay all who had molested him. Once avenged, he assumed the form of a grizzly bear and ran away, never to return.

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THE DOG'S WIFE[44]

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A chief and his wife had a daughter who, not having reached the age of puberty, always slept beside her father. One night she was startled by finding a man holding intercourse with her, but she could not tell who it was. The same thing happened repeatedly just before dawn, her seducer always fleeing so rapidly that she could not identify him. Greatly puzzled, she at last hit on a plan to find her lover. Like all women she carried a small bag containing the paint used to decorate herself; she took this to bed with her, unclosed, and determined to throw it at the person who was visiting her. Towards dawn she was awakened as usual, hurled her pouch in the darkness, and heard the thud as it struck someone. In the morning everyone noticed that an ugly old dog living in the house had a smear of paint over its face and there was considerable discussion as to how this could have happened. The girl was terrified, suspecting, as was the case, that the dog had heard her make some unkind remark about its face and had become her lover in revenge.

The girl soon felt that she was pregnant. The time of delivery arrived with unprecedented rapidity, and she gave birth to four puppies, three

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[44] Bella Bella story.

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males and one female. The anger and wrath of her proud parents was beyond expression, since such a disgrace had never been known in their illustrious family. To mark her shame, they dubbed her *Nemilcat*, "The Mother of Dogs." Her father wished her to die but, unwilling to slay his own daughter, decided to accomplish this end indirectly by abandoning her without food or clothing to die of starvation. He instructed the people to gather up all the provisions and household utensils and to pile them on planks removed from the walls of the house and laid across canoes. Then they moved away. The girl's only friend was a kindly slave who, taking advantage of a time when no one was looking, hid for her an old cape used as a protection against rain, and a few embers contained in the shell of a large mussel.

As soon as the people had departed, *Nemilcat* took out the shell and blew the coals into a flame with which she started a fire. Then she started out to hunt clams. No sooner had she left the house than the three little dogs, the three oldest of the litter, took off their animal skins, hung them on a cross-beam of the house, and began to play in the form of little boys, taking care to send out the single sister to warn them when their mother was approaching. As she drew near, the watcher notified her brothers, who reassumed their dog-skins and lay curled up asleep when *Nemilcat* returned. This went on day after day; the mother went out to gather clams and her offspring became little boys in her absence. She was much puzzled at finding marks in the house, not footprints that could be recognized as such, but trampled earth and small objects moved from the places where she had left them; in fact, just such traces as exist where children have been playing. So she determined to find out the cause. One evening as dusk was falling, she went out as usual to the clam-bed, where she hung her hat and cloak on her digging-stick and crept back naked to the rear of the house. The watching puppy did not discover the subterfuge and her brothers continued their play as boys. *Nemilcat* peered through a crack in the wall, saw the dog-skins hanging on the beams, and, dashing in, threw them on the fire.

With their skins destroyed, the dog-children were unable to reassume animal form, the female alone remaining as she had been. *Nemilcat* began to weep bitterly.

"See the mischief you have caused," she cried. "My father and my mother have abandoned me because you were dogs. All this could have been avoided if only you had appeared in human form at once."

Nemilcat's children had inherited some of their father's supernatural power and they now intimated what professions they would undertake.

The eldest barked, and then spoke to her in Bella Bella.

"I shall be a house builder," he said.

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The second brother likewise barked before saying:

"I shall build canoes."

Last of all the youngest barked and stated:

"I shall be a hunter."

The mother said nothing to the three assertions. Next morning the dwelling had been enlarged and was beautifully furnished with mats, boxes, and all other requisites of a chief's house, and it was amply provided with all kinds of meat ready for cooking. Glancing through the front door, *Nuwálisat* saw that numerous canoes were lying on the beach.

Not long afterwards, the slave who had helped the girl saw smoke rising from her house and went to investigate, taking care not to say anything of his plan to his master. The visitor was delighted to find *Nuwálisat* well and prosperous, the happy mother of three sturdy sons. She gave him some seal meat, which he took home intending to eat it secretly with his wife and child during the night. The slave heated it without attracting attention but, unfortunately, a piece of the meat lodged in his son's throat and the lad nearly choked to death. His coughing aroused the chief's wife with whose assistance the obstruction was removed, but she saw what it was and insisted on being told whence it had been obtained. So the slave recounted his visit to his master's daughter, adding that the latter was prosperous and did not want to see her parents. In later years, however, when they were old and feeble, *Nuwálisat* brought them to her house and cared for them.

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A second version, collected from another informant, states that the leading character of the story was a Bella Bella girl secluded at puberty, and that the dog visited her in her place of concealment in a corner of the house. She learnt her lover's identity by the device of paint and in time gave birth to five puppies, whereupon her father abandoned her. An old slave, alone, helped her by leaving a few glowing embers. The girl supported herself on clams which she dug at some distance from the house. During her absence her offspring became human children; when she discovered this she threw their discarded dog-skins into the fire. Then the one female puppy spoke, telling her eldest brother to become a house-builder; the second, a canoe-maker; the third, a hunter; and the fourth, a halibut-fisher. She, herself, then ran away and was never seen again.

This version describes how the dog-children exercised their respective abilities until their mother became wealthy, and how her former associates, seeing smoke arising from the deserted settlement, were curious. The friendly slave finally investigated, and was given the seal meat on

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which his child choked. Thus her father learnt of his daughter's prosperity, but he refused to allow his followers to join her, until driven to do so by famine. Then the Mother-of-Dogs received all of them hospitably except her own father.

Qwinao's REVENGE

Long, long ago, a few generations after the earth had first been settled, the principal Kimsquit chief was named *Smaoan*. He was very wealthy, largely on account of the sole possession of a suitable place for netting olachen. Becoming jealous of his good fortune, four brothers determined to murder *Smaoan*, and did so one day as the unsuspecting chief was, as usual, catching fish. He had only one child, an infant named *Qwinao*, who was now left destitute and poor. Sometimes he lived with his mother, and sometimes with a sister of his father, according to which of them was able to feed him; his clothing was rags, for they were all very poor. Meanwhile, the four wicked men were prospering. Every year they caught large quantities of olachen on the fishing ground which they had stolen from the murdered man.

The years passed until *Qwinao* grew into manhood. One spring he asked the four brothers for some olachen and they gave him some, which he gleefully carried home to his aunt. As she was cooking the fish he told her from whom he had obtained them.

"That is what killed your father," she said.

She then told her nephew for the first time the reason for his father's murder.

Qwinao felt very sad. The next morning at daybreak he washed in the river, and then set off into the mountains, ignorant of where he was going, but determined to obtain power and have his revenge. He travelled on aimlessly, day after day, until he heard voices which seemed like those of women at play. Going nearer, he saw that the speakers were really mountain goats, and when he drew still closer he saw that they were hermaphrodites, which explained their feminine voices. The animals greeted him in a friendly fashion but told him not to come where they were.

"We know what you want," they said. "You want to obtain supernatural strength from Grizzly Bear, but you are on the wrong track. Take that path over there, it is the road of the bears, and presently you will see where the road of the grizzlies diverges from that of the black bears. Follow the former until you come to a lake where you must hide. The bears will come to you before long."

The friendly goats had given to *Qwinao* their own marvellous ability

539 787 to scale mountains and their own power of vision. Thanks to these gifts the young man was able to pick out and follow the bear road as it led over the rugged crests, and to distinguish where the black bear road diverged. As his guides had told him, he came to a pool and there hid himself, wondering the while for what purpose could be the bundles of thorny branches tied up like balls.

Presently a mother grizzly bear and three cubs appeared, doffed their bear-skins, and in the form of human beings dived into the pool. In their exuberance of spirits they threw heavy stones to and fro as if they had been pebbles. *Qwinao* watched for some time, then jumped forth from his hiding place and seized their animal cloaks. Dispossessed of their skins, wherein lay their power, the bears were helpless.

"Please give me some of your strength," said *Qwinao* to them.

"All right," replied the mother bear, "come in and swim with us."

Qwinao dived into the pool among the animals, swam around for a few minutes, and then returned to the shore.

"Come in again," said the bear.

Once more he dived in, and as before returned to the bank after a short swim. A third time the bear called him back into the water, and finally bade him come for a fourth dip. When he had returned to land for the fourth time she said to him:

"Now lift that stone."

The stone was one of the heavy boulders which the bears had been tossing to and fro like balls. *Qwinao* tried to lift it, but it was too heavy.

"The food that you have been eating has weakened you," said the bear. "You must get rid of it."

She held before him a circular wooden dish which appeared to *Qwinao* to have been produced from the air, and bade him vomit. He tried to eject the contents of his stomach but could only gulp. Then the bear patted him on the back so that he was able to void large quantities of water in which dog salmon had been soaked; to this miserable fare his poverty had reduced him. Now that he was free of this baneful food, *Qwinao* was in a position to derive benefit from the bears. Once more he swam in the pool while the mother bear scoured him with a bundle of thorny branches, as though it had been a sponge with which she was washing an infant. During the process *Qwinao* felt new vigour surging through him. Then the eldest of the cubs scrubbed him in the same manner, and *Qwinao* felt that he was becoming stronger. In turn the second, and then the youngest rubbed him, until he felt that he had the might of a grizzly bear. But when the mother bear told him to lift the stone he pretended to be unable to do so, in the hope of obtaining still greater strength from them. Puzzled, she came to shore, felt *Qwinao* all

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over, and concluded that he had acquired the vigour which she had aimed to impart to him. So she told him simply to come in and swim with them, and again dived back to resume her play with her cubs. After watching the four throwing the stones to and fro, *Qwinao* dived in, joined their sport, and threw the boulders even as far as they were able for he had acquired the power of a bear. The five left the pool together and when the animals had reassumed their form they gave *Qwinao* a bear blanket. On donning this he, too, became a grizzly bear.

"Now," said the mother bear, "you can go home and take revenge on the murderers of your father. Only remember, you must not do so, or show your strength, for one year. Your name is now *Nänänllis* [a word derived from *nän·*, a grizzly bear]. Henceforth I and my cubs will be your friends and will be at hand to help you if you ever need us."

The four bears accompanied *Qwinao* towards his home, all travelling rapidly in bear form. Near his aunt's house he took off his blanket and carefully hung it up in a secure place; this restored him to human form and he went home, while his bear friends went off into the woods. *Qwinao* thought that he had been absent only a single day, but when he came to the village he found that it was autumn, although the olachen had been running when he went away. This was because he had been in the land of supernatural beings where one day is the equivalent of a year among mortals. He went to his aunt's door in the twilight. The old woman, who had concluded that her nephew was long dead, was delighted at seeing him return not only alive but appearing strong and well. She had very little food but she gave him the best available.

Obedient to the instructions given him by the mother bear, *Qwinao* did not immediately take his revenge. All winter he remained almost secluded in his aunt's house, but when spring came and the olachen were running, he paddled down in a river canoe to his father's fishing-ground where the four murderers had built four olachen-traps with firm interwoven branches, capable of resisting any flood. In the canoe with *Qwinao* was a mere child to whom he had given the nominal place as captain in the stern, while he himself poled in the bow. He guided his canoe against one of the weirs which broke before the impact as if it had been made of twigs, then, in succession he destroyed the three others in like fashion. Next *Qwinao* began to make four olachen-weirs for himself. Under normal circumstances the construction of one is a long and laborious task, requiring the pounding in of heavy stakes with mallets, but *Qwinao*, endowed as he was with the strength of a grizzly bear, merely shoved in the posts without effort. As he was working, the four murderers came up, very angry at the destruction of their weirs. One of them struck a savage blow at the destroyer with a stake, but *Qwinao* merely caught it with one

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*539 *787 hand, as if it had been a blow from a feather, and wrenched it from his opponent. Another of the brothers likewise struck at him with a pole, but again *Q̣winao* seized it from his grasp. Then he stretched out one hand, caught the holder of the stick by the neck, and squeezed until the man's head parted from his body. In the same manner *Q̣winao* killed two more of the brothers, allowing only one of them to escape. His bear friends had been in the vicinity, but help from them was not required.

Q̣winao finished the construction of his olachen-weirs and then went back to his aunt's house. The brother who had escaped had already brought tidings of what had occurred, and the old woman, fearful of the consequences, angrily asked *Q̣winao* why he had done such a thing. He quickly quieted her by reminding her that it was she who had led him to think of revenge by telling him of the reason of his father's murder.

Q̣winao remained quietly at home for the rest of that summer and the ensuing winter, but early in the spring he began to build an enormous salmon-weir. The fame of his strength had spread far and near among the coastal people so that many of them came to assist him. The weir was rapidly finished and was a great success. With the wealth of salmon obtained, *Q̣winao* was able to give numerous potlatches and took for himself the name *Łäliäkdja*. In course of time he married the daughter of *uyuyuyut*.

Q̣winao was a great inventor. The next winter he made a net for olachen, which he used with great success in the spring. It was the first time that this had ever been done and the pattern he used has since been copied by the Kimsquit people. The following winter his aunt, acting on his instructions, made the first small salmon-net. Not only are the invention of these two useful articles ascribed to *Q̣winao*, but also the first use of the bow and arrow, as well as other valuable appliances. After a long life he died, but he is still remembered for his achievements.[11]

A NEGLECTED OPPORTUNITY

[828] A few Bella Coola believe that supernatural experiences of the foregoing type tend to occur in certain families, although not with sufficient frequency to be called an inheritable characteristic. A middle-aged man who held this belief gave the following account of a personal encounter.

His father had obtained power from a black bear, and once when hunting he himself saw a track of which three footprints were those of a

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[424] [11] The above differs from the usual tales of this category in that the participants are well known. In consequence their descendants take a family pride in it and tend to add it to the ancestral myth of the first *Smaian*, perhaps improperly. Probably it is a tale that members of a certain family have sought to ascribe to their own ancestors.

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bear, while the fourth was human. Realizing that he was close to the supernatural, he followed the track and after considerable trailing killed a black bear. Half an hour later, when he returned to the "dead" animal, after unsuccessfully stalking another, it spoke to him:

"Why do you hunt me?" it asked.

The hunter fled, not believing that he was sufficiently purified through the observance of ceremonial chastity to take advantage of what was being offered to him. As he hurried back to his gasoline launch he saw a large deer within easy range but refrained from shooting, for he knew it was the same creature which had first appeared to him as a bear. A seal was sleeping on the water beside his boat which he could have killed with a club, but again he refrained, believing it to be another manifestation of the same. If he had been brave enough he would have spoken to the bear and obtained from it power of some kind.

This differs somewhat from the usual type of story, probably because white influence had already affected the Bella Coola at the time of the event.

THE MAN WHO SLEW *Ălquntăm*'S SON

A Cape Mudge chief, armed with a good rifle, was hunting at Knight Inlet. He had climbed a mountain when, looking down, he saw coming up after him a strange, large beast with a big nose and black and white striped skin, in general characteristics something like a bear, yet obviously not one. It had been seen previously at Kingcome Inlet, so must have crossed the mountains. The chief, who had never seen anything like it, was amazed, and hesitated to fire. When the animal came near him it sniffed, then rushed at the man and seized his rifle, which it threw away down the mountain. The two wrestled and the man managed to shove the beast down the slope where his gun lay. He fell also, and, exerting his last ounce of strength, the hunter seized the rifle, pressed it against the animal and fired. It dropped dead. The hunter took the skin back to his village, where it caused much wonder and admiration.

Not long afterwards the man gave a potlatch at which each of his fellow chiefs hoped to be the recipient of the remarkable pelt. Before making his distribution of presents, the donor broke a valuable copper and placed a small piece of it on the fire, saying:

"The supreme god is above you all. I will make a present to him first."

This was the first time that the chiefs had seen this done, but they said nothing. The presents were distributed as usual, and someone was given the much coveted skin.

Some time afterwards, when this chief was hunting mallards with a shotgun, he saw a bear asleep with its head on a log, and fired at it from

*539 *787 point-blank range, apparently killing it. He had rolled the carcass over to the bank, preparatory to skinning it, when the second barrel accidentally exploded. The noise woke the "dead" bear, which grappled with the hunter and mauled him in spite of his cry:

"I never hurt you."

The man finally escaped and made the best of his way back to the village in a badly wounded condition, dripping blood. Some boys saw him and rushed home, telling of the state in which the chief was returning. Suddenly a supernatural being appeared to him, saying:

"I am *Älquntäm*'s son whom you have twice slain while I was attending to my father's business. *But he has been pleased at your gift of* copper, so I will help you."

The supernatural stranger was none other than the cherished son of *Älquntäm*, *Sänollx̣ımulelts Älquntäm*. It was he who had previously appeared, first as the strange creature, and then as a bear. He told the man to close his eyes, and, when he had done so, his wounds disappeared. Soon after the people, who had been summoned by the boys to help the hunter, met him returning and were amazed to find him unscarred.

THE MAN WHO WAS HELPED BY GRIZZLY BEAR

[262] Once long ago, there was a poor man who had no friends. Nothing that he attempted prospered, until finally he was reduced to drinking the water in which dog salmon had been steeped preparatory to boiling. One day when walking in the forest, he saw a man swimming in a lake. It was really Grizzly Bear which had stripped off its skin on the bank and had entered the water as a man to wash and amuse itself by throwing heavy stones back and forth.

"Please come in," said the swimmer to the poor man. "Take off your clothes and wash with me."

The man did so, and when he was in the lake the bear said to him:

"You have been doing wrong in drinking that foul dog salmon water. None of us supernatural ones like you to do so."

The bear massaged the stomach of the man and pressed his fingers into his mouth until he vomited. This he did four times, until the man was purged of all the salmon water. The bear strongly urged him never [262] to drink any more of it, and since that time men have obeyed the injunction, realizing that the supernatural ones do not like it. The poor man was then scrubbed with devil's club, brambles, spruce branches, and other thorny boughs which lacerated his flesh. Next, the bear threw one of the heavy stones across the lake, and told the man to toss it back. He tried and failed. Again the supernatural one washed him with the thorny branches, and again threw the stone. This time the man was able to hurl it back the full distance.

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The washing had made him strong as a grizzly bear, lithe and handsome, and had also given him the ability to see supernatural beings when concealed from the eyes of ordinary mortals. This last accomplishment was due to his having been made so clean by the expulsion of all the filth from his body that the supernatural ones had no aversion to being seen by him. After the cleansing, the man returned to his village, where he soon entered into an argument with two of the people who had been unkind to him. They quarrelled and the man seized his enemies and pulled their arms from their bodies. The parents of the injured men were angry and wished to take revenge on the assailant, but were prevented by friends who pointed out that the punishment given to their sons was well warranted.

THE LAD WHO VISITED THE HOME OF THE FISH

Long, long ago, there lived a lad who was so poor that all he had for clothing was a rough goat-skin blanket. He was so miserable and friendless that he made up his mind to commit suicide. The ice was breaking in the Bella Coola River at the time, and large cakes were floating down to the sea. The lad leaped out upon one block, then sprang to another, and finally into a clear patch of water. Associates seeking to dissuade him had followed him from one cake of ice to another, but they drew back when he plunged into the cold water.

The youth was not drowned. He found a road under the water which led him to the land of the herring; then, still following the path, he passed in succession the countries of the olachen, the steel-head salmon, the spring salmon, the sockeye salmon, the hump-back salmon, the dog salmon, and lastly the cohoe. Each kind of fish dwelt in its own country, the cohoe salmon, being the last to reach the Bella Coola River, living at the greatest distance from it. Not long after his arrival in the land of the fish, the salmon boat, *Noākymm*, left for Bella Coola and on it the youth returned home. Owing to this experience he became in time both wealthy and famous.

THE SUCCESSFUL SEALER

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Long, long ago, a man living at *Sɩnxl* failed to display the generosity expected of him as a chief. He showed no initiative or pride, accepting what was given him without demur, and doing nothing to uphold the dignity of his ancestral home. Whenever a feast was given, this man's share was thrown down so clumsily before him that he was spattered with the food, but he was too lethargic even to show resentment. His four

*539 *787 sons, of whom the eldest was about sixteen, though old enough to appreciate the slights put upon their father, could do nothing to defend him.

[556] On a winter day one of these lads felt impelled to follow a trail down the north side of the Bella Coola valley along the edge of salt water. The weather had been cold for some time, but on this day it was so warm that he lay down to doze on the warm rocks. Near his head was a small opening which connected with a long passage to the ocean, and through this he presently heard the hoarse breathing of sleeping seals. His hunting desires aroused, he went to the edge of the steep crag overlooking the sea and dived in. He bravely penetrated into a narrow passage which led him under the rocks, until with his last gasp he emerged into a cave where there were countless seals. Waiting only a moment, and without disturbing the animals, he dived back through the passage safely.

[411] When he reached home the lad said nothing about what he had seen, but that evening he began to make a seal-spear of the usual type with a wooden handle and a bone point. He asked his father to help him with this carpentry task, and his mother to make a rope for the harpoon-head. Though surprised at their son's energy, the parents did as he requested, but the fellow-villagers mocked at his efforts, for the lad was no hunter.

Next morning he asked his father to accompany him, and the two set off in a canoe, carrying the spear which had been made the previous evening. Before starting, the lad requested one of his brothers to have a fire ready for cooking the spoil that night. Father and son paddled to the entrance of the subterranean passage, though the old man was, of course, ignorant of its existence. The son told him to wait, and dived overboard, armed only with a club, for the seal-spear had really been unnecessary. He penetrated through the passage and at once killed a seal pup, born that year, with which he returned to the canoe. The lad explained nothing to his father, so that it seemed to the latter as if his son had dived down into the depths and there slain a seal, after remaining below for an amazingly long time.

When the two returned to the village they were greeted with a shriek of laughter at the small size of their quarry. In derision, the villagers took the pup from them and threw it from hand to hand, as if it had been a ball.

[224] [225] [574] [556] As already described, it is customary whenever a man kills a deer, a mountain goat, several seals, or any other large game, for him to invite his fellows to a feast. The number of guests depends on the size of the quarry, but in all cases the chiefs are the first to be invited and anyone who fails to do so is laughed at for his stinginess. On this occasion the seal-pup was obviously so small that any general invitation to partake of it was ludicrous. Nevertheless, the lad sent a herald to invite not only

the people of his own village but those of two neighbouring towns. All accepted, as is customary, irrespective of the amount of food. The carcass was cut up and the guests received such minute portions that they became wildly hilarious over the meagre fare provided and flung many insulting remarks at their host. This was what the lad had planned. Confident of his ability to establish his good name, he desired to make his resurgence more striking by first emphasizing his degradation. 539* 787* 556

Next day the father and son again went hunting, and this time the lad killed a seal of slightly larger size. Once more he called in his neighbours and again they made sarcastic remarks about his poverty. The succeeding day he killed one large seal, and summoned the people. Next day he slew two seals; the next, four; then eight, sixteen, and thirty-two on successive days. Each evening a feast was held and the booty distributed. By this time contempt and scorn had been replaced by respectful wonder, and when the hunter returned with his canoe filled with seals everyone was able to eat to repletion. There was a surfeit of the highly esteemed flesh.

The next day the lad brought back his canoe filled with seals, and the same night the people gathered for the usual feast. Now was the time for which the youth had been waiting. When the carcasses had been cut up and cooked, ready for distribution, he made a speech, reminding those present of the manner in which his parents had been "dirtied," by food thrown at them during feasts, and how they had never actively resented it. Then he intimated that he was about to retaliate. Starting with the chiefs at the upper end of the house, he threw pieces of cooked seal at his guests, nor did he desist until the faces and chests of all had been well spattered with the grease. The people, realizing that it was their own rudeness which was being returned to them, could not defend themselves.

The successful sealer had had a second quantity of seal meat cooked in readiness, which he now distributed to his ruffled guests in a gracious manner. In this way he was able to refurbish the prestige of his family. By his lavish donations of seal meat on many occasions, he gained a reputation for generosity which was envied by all.[16]

STORIES ILLUSTRATING SUPERNATURAL GOOD LUCK

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THE *Mätsqus*

Not many years ago two men were canoeing up the Kimsquit River. As one of them pressed down with his pole he saw that it had grazed a

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[16] It is not clear whether or not this story should, strictly speaking, be included in this category. Such a sudden stroke of fortune is termed a *nuq!'antuikim*. It seemed as if the seals themselves had given their lives to this lad in his misfortune.

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mātsqus lying on the stones at the bottom of the river. Realizing his danger, he swiftly hurled the pole on to the shore beneath a huge cedar where no rain could penetrate. Here it remained for twenty or thirty years until it had become covered with moss.

One day two sisters chanced to pass that way and the younger wished to gather some of the moss, but the elder, who apparently surmised with what the pole had been in contact, was afraid and tried to dissuade her. The heedless girl picked some of the moss, and threw it towards her elder sister, saying:

"Pshaw! It is nothing."

The moss struck her, and the older girl, now thoroughly frightened, was determined that if any ill results were to follow, her younger sister should likewise suffer from them. So she, too, gathered some of the moss and threw it on the first picker. Nothing happened until they had gone home and drawn near to the fire when both began to swell. They told what had befallen them, but it was too late to apply any remedy and both continued to expand until their stomachs burst and they died.[17]

THE *Mātsqus* THAT WAS CAUGHT IN A NET

Between 1860 and 1870, a young man, related to the Bella Coola from whom this account was obtained, was netting salmon near *Tcimotl*. He had caught all that he needed but decided to make one more haul. As he did so, he saw in the water a giant toad with enormous shining eyes and white feet. It was a *mātsqus*. The beast entered the net which sank under its weight. The terrified fisherman plucked up enough courage to haul in his net, and found that the toad had turned to a stone, the surface of which was smeared with grease. He placed it on top of his salmon and went home to summon the people of his own and neighbouring villages to view the wonder. There were ancient traditions about such beasts having been caught in nets, but this was the first time that such a marvel had ever been seen by any of the eager crowd that thronged the bank. A very old man, well-informed in such matters, now appeared and warned the people to keep away from the space between the stone and the river. No sooner had they obeyed than the whole bank caved in, carrying into the water, canoes, the pile of freshly landed salmon, and the mysterious stone. The old man had heard of a similar occurrence, and his knowledge saved the lives of the onlookers.

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[17] The usual explanation given for the bursting of the stomach is that some of the fire from the monster has entered the victim's body, and there increased on coming close to a blaze. A remedy in the early stages of swelling is said to be the eating of an uncooked mallard duck.

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The fisherman did not obtain supernatural good fortune as a result of his capture, because he neither retained the object nor kept silent about what he had seen.

THE MAN WHO ACCIDENTALLY KILLED A *Mätsqus*

In the village of *Ṫsukt* there lived an old man and an old woman with four grown-up sons. Early one morning the eldest of these saw a merganser below the dam at the village and decided to spear it. Armed with a new, sharp-pointed canoe pole he had crept out on the fish-trap, when, not far from it, he saw a toad about the size of a beaver sitting upon the water. He had heard of the power of such beasts, but was ignorant of the proper procedure for obtaining it, so thought he would try the effect of rubbing the end of his pole across its back. But when he thrust it out with this intention, the staff jumped from his hand and pierced the toad's body, so that it died. This power of attracting objects to itself was one *of the animal's attributes of which the man was not aware. He pulled it* ashore with a stick and roused his household, crying:

"Get up! Get up! See what I have slain. I did not intend to kill it but the pole sprang away from me."

Everyone rushed to the bank, and when they saw what was there they exclaimed:

"Why did you do such a thing when there was no one near to advise you?"

One man recommended him to go to an old man named *Sla·* who lived at the village of *Sno'oniqwulx*. It was said that this man understood how to deal with such matters.

This seemed good advice, so the four brothers went off to conult *Sla·*, saying to him:

"We have come on very important business."

Sla· cut short their speech by replying:

"I know all about it. You have had power come to you. Have you four wolves?"

"No," replied the brothers, and *Sla·* continued:

"I have two on this side of the river, and two on the opposite shore. Unless we can fix this up satisfactorily you will die, but if we succeed in doing it correctly you will become wealthy."

The brothers accompanied *Sla·* up the slope of a mountain where he had two wolf heads concealed in a box. They took these and went with him to another box concealed on a mountain on the other side of the river where there were two more. *Sla·* took the four heads and escorted the brothers back to their village, stopping only to gather some wild gooseberry branches. On these he laid the *mätsqus*, for, of course, it was no

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948

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toad, with its head to the east, and told all the spectators to stand in front of it, while he seated himself to the westward. Apparently, *Sla·* intended to dismember the creature, and the people wondered how he would do it, because they saw no cutting tool. However, when ready he reached behind him and took a leaf with sharp edges. It was a salal leaf which seemed to have come there for his purpose. With this he cut the *mätsqus* into four longitudinal sections, starting each from the mouth. He measured these pieces and instructed a carpenter to make immediately four boxes to fit the sections, with a small hole in one of the lower corners of each. When these were ready, he placed in each one of the strips of flesh and one of the wolf heads. He then told the brothers to put two of the boxes on a mountain to the right of the river, the other two on one to the left, placing each so that the corner with the hole in it should be at the south-west, where no water could enter. Then *Sla·* went home.

This treatment brought wealth to the brothers. First the eldest began to prosper, and within a year gave four potlatches. After that he began to have pains in his side; his skin wore away and he died. This was because water had penetrated the box designated as his.

Then wealth began to flow in upon the second brother without effort on his part. He too gave four potlatches within a single year, but the water penetrated his box and he also died, after suffering similar pains in his side. The third and the fourth brothers experienced precisely the same fate; each became wealthy after his senior's death, and each died when, after giving four potlatches, the water entered his box.

THE MAN WHO HOOKED A *Mätsqus*

Within the lifetime of an old Bella Coola, *Staots*, a *Täl·io* man, and *Piqotla*, a Bella Coola who had a reputation for making evil medicines, were out fishing together for halibut. *Piqotla* hooked something which he tried to haul in, but it was so heavy that he was making slow progress when suddenly a mass of water rushed from his body, by which sign he knew that it was a *mätsqus*. He continued to haul in his line until the creature came in sight. It resembled a toad, but was large as a bear and had in its throat a burning fire. Such beasts had been found before on several occasions, and in their stomachs had always been valuable stones.

As the *mätsqus* came near the surface the canoe began to spin round as if caught in a whirlpool. *Piqotla*, terrified, let out his line, not daring to try to haul in the animal, but presently the hooked *mätsqus* rose voluntarily to the surface and *Staots* said to his companion:

"Don't drop your line; it has come for me."

"All right, take it," *Piqotla* replied.

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He passed his line to the speaker without ever glancing behind him. The two men paddled slowly to the shore, towing the *mätsqus* astern, its goggle eyes blinking, but when they reached the beach it jumped violently above the water and fell back with a splash that drenched *Staots*. The hook pulled out and the animal escaped.

Piqotla understood what must be done under the circumstances. He went home but without pausing there walked on into the forest, taking care not to look back. When he came to a rotten log he dug under it until he had collected and eaten four white slugs with black and white faces. He covered up the hole he had made, then continued his journey till he came to another log from which he likewise dug four and devoured them. He concealed the traces of his digging and went on to a third, thence to a fourth, in each case eating four slugs and covering the hole. Had he not thus concealed his work, his anus would have rotted away.

Piqotla remained for four days in the woods, constantly using his magical brews, and in that way escaped evil effects. But the unfortunate *Staots* went to his home, told all his neighbours about what he had seen, and sat down beside the fire. Presently his stomach burst and he fell dead. When four days had elapsed, *Piqotla* returned to the village, carefully avoiding the road, for if he had travelled on that he would have died. Everybody told him of the death of his companion, which he explained by saying that *Staots* must have been ignorant of the proper method of dealing with a *mätsqus*. If he had known that, he, *Piqotla*, would never have passed the line to his friend, whom he imagined would not have asked for it had he been unaware of how to deal with the beast.

THE TRAPPING OF A *Mätsqus*

About 1880 a celebrated chief named *Sinxâlotla* set his traps for beaver in Lake Kisik. He had barely left them when, to his surprise, because it was daylight, he heard a splash and a struggle and turned back to find a beaver caught in his trap. He clubbed the animal, skinned it, and again set out for home. He had gone scarcely twenty yards when he again heard a tumult, and returned to find another beaver in his trap. This one he also clubbed and skinned, and again left the place. A third time a beaver entered his trap as soon as he left it, and he dealt with this in the same fashion, as well as with a fourth which appeared. By this time he realized that there was something uncanny about the occurrences, and, therefore, declined to turn back for a fifth which he heard splashing in his trap as soon as he had moved away after skinning the fourth. That night *Sinxâlotla* and his children ate the game.

Next morning when he returned to the lake wherein his traps were set he found it in a turmoil. Waves were raging on it as if it were the

* 539 ocean, although there was no wind. He was thirsty and bent down to
* 787 scoop up a little water in his hands, which he drank. Then he made a
small raft on which to go out to the trap where he had caught the four
777 beaver the preceding day. In it he saw a *mâtiqus*, like a toad but big as a bear, and with a throat that glowed with fire. *Sinxâlotla* made all speed back to the bank, but fell in a faint as he reached it, with his head barely out of the water. He lay there all day, but towards dusk recovered sufficiently to stagger away. He rocked and reeled as if he were drunk, but kept in mind what he had been told by the old people about avoiding the trail. Near home he shouted for *Nalendaxw'*, an old man well versed in such matters, and when the latter came to him *Sinxâlotla* said:

"I have seen what you told me about."

Nalendaxw' took hammer and wedges and led the way to a pine sapling which he split vertically, so that *Sinxâlotla* could pass through it. The sufferer followed the old man to three other trees which he wedged apart in like fashion, and through which *Sinxâlotla* passed. Then *Nalendaxw'* bade him build a small shelter with a platform where *Sinxâlotla* stayed for four days, while *Nalendaxw'* fumigated him in the smoke of a fire made of four thorny medicinal plants.

For two whole years *Sinxâlotla* remained in this rude shelter, unable to move more than a few steps on account of the sickness which had entered his body with the water he had drunk. At the end of that time he was able to move around with a stick, and ultimately he recovered.

Sinxâlotla failed to derive any benefit from the sight of a *mâtiqus*, because he had been afraid to take advantage of it. A brave man, strengthened by the observance of ceremonial chastity, would have touched the creature's back with the end of his pole, would have hidden this carefully, and in one year he would have begun to show remarkable success as a hunter. *Sinxâlotla* escaped from death because he had avoided walking along a road traversed by unclean women; if he had done so while he had within him some of the mysterious power of the great toad, imbibed in drinking from the lake, he would have perished. The cure practised in this case was peculiar, since usually the approach of a patient to a fire causes his stomach to burst.

THE MAN WHO ATE A *Sisiutl*

Four brothers were hunting mountain goats when they came to a place, *Nimiltnk*, where the animals congregated for mating. At one edge of a level stretch the ground fell away, sheer as a precipice, and the eldest brother conceived the brilliant idea of spreading near the brink of this drop a number of slippery, outside planks of cedar. These they laid with the rounded side on the ground, so that they would tip when a goat stepped

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on them and threw the animal to the ground far below. They covered the planks with moss, to disguise the trap, and then awaited results. It was mating time and when a she-goat slipped and fell over, all the males, thinking she had jumped down to elude them, leapt off in pursuit and were killed also. This method of hunting proved so successful that with the valuable wool obtained the four brothers were able to give many potlatches and became chiefs. During the summer they carefully concealed the slippery boards, fearing that someone might see them and copy the ruse.

Not long after they had thus become wealthy the four brothers chanced to be hunting on the distant side of the mountain, where there were a number of small streams flowing into a lake with no outlet to the sea. The eldest was some distance from the others when they saw some spring salmon in one of the rivulets. The second brother touched one of these fish on the neck with his hunting stick, and at once it jumped on the land and flopped about, shedding its scales. In spite of the unusual behaviour of the salmon, combined with its presence in an inland stream, the three hunters were not suspicious, so they killed and cooked it. As the fish was roasting before the fire the eldest brother returned and, noticing that its flesh was still quivering, burst out in wrath:

"What do you mean by killing a salmon in a place like this? Where could the fish have come from? Don't you remember what our father has told us so often? It must be a *suiatl* which you have killed and soon you will die."

"You are always afraid of something," said the second brother, laughing. "It is just an ordinary spring salmon, and as I am hungry I am going to eat it."

The third brother agreed with the second and the two devoured the fish, but the youngest heeded the advice of the eldest and would not touch it. Soon after eating, the stomachs of the two rash men split. As they lay dying the eldest said to them:

"It is your own fault. I warned you, but you have always been too hot-headed."

The erring ones agreed before they died. The eldest and youngest brothers went home, where their father was grief-stricken when they told him of the deaths of his other two sons.

Such deaths resulting from the eating of a *suiatl* are not uncommon. A man will sometimes find in the forest dried slices of sockeye salmon, or the heads of spring salmon, which are in reality *suiatl* that have assumed this form, and if the finder eats them he will die. A few years ago a

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Bella Bella man was fishing when a salmon jumped into his canoe and died at once, without the usual flopping and struggling. The fisherman took it home and ate it, though his wife refused to touch it, as being uncanny. Presently the man's lower jaw became diseased and he lost his teeth. The salmon must have been a *suiatl*.[illegible]

The mere sight of a *suiatl* does not bring the misfortune which follows the killing of one by faulty means. On the other hand, if slain in the proper manner great good fortune will result. One method is to put a stick near it in the water, whereupon the fish will jump ashore and flop around, shedding its scales. The hunter should then kill it and, crouching down, say:

"I wish I had a salalberry leaf, or a piece of dead alder."

Both of these have sharp-cutting edges. If he then puts his right hand behind him, whichever he has asked for will be there, though no one knows how it comes. Then he must cut the fish lengthwise into two parts, throw away the right half and the head, wrap the left in his cape,[illegible] and run from the spot, taking care to go neither up nor down hill. Soon a landslide will take place, sweeping away the ground on which he has stood, even though it be level. He must hide the half *suiatl* in a hole in a cedar tree for one year without saying anything about his treasure. During this period he must not hunt or embark on any other important enterprise.

When the year has elapsed he may tell the people of his experience and sell tiny fragments of the *suiatl* for large sums. The purchasers wrap these fragments in cedar-bark and with them daub fish-weirs and traps, thus attracting animals and fish. A man obtaining a *suiatl* in this way can show his children where it is concealed, and so transmit his power to them.

THE CATCHING OF A *Suiatl*

Not many years ago, a certain *Osludo-i* constructed an ocean salmon-trap below Kimsquit. One moonlight night he saw in it a white, gleaming salmon and at once jumped to the conclusion that it was a *suiatl*. Being a wild, reckless fellow, he determined to try to obtain supernatural good fortune from his prey, though he was ignorant of the proper procedure. Waiting until the receding tide had almost laid bare the floor of his pen, he leapt down from the weir and clubbed the salmon to death, heedless of the scales which it was shedding in all directions. Then *Osludo-i* cut it

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[illegible] It appears that the fisherman was a victim of pyorrhoea, in consequence of which his teeth were extracted by a dentist, but the patient is convinced that his misfortunes are due to the salmon which entered his canoe.

[illegible] The left of anything is said to be more valuable than the right because when a man dresses it is the left side which is nearer the last.

into strips, using his ordinary knife, and returned home, where he sat 539*
down near some women and close to the fire. Before long he began to 787*
feel ill; his stomach grew larger and larger, and finally split in various
places so that the raw flesh could be seen. No shaman could help him 777
and within a year he was dead.

STORIES ILLUSTRATING SHAMANISM

THE FORTUNES OF *Qwaw-a*

Qwaw-a was a blind man about thirty years old who lived with his wife 539*
at the head of Rivers Inlet. Before he had lost his sight he had been a 787*
successful hunter, but now he could no longer provide for her and they 756*
were often on the verge of starvation. One autumn the two had gone some little distance from the village to a small creek in which the woman was fishing with a gaff for the dying salmon that had spawned and were too listless to escape. As *Qwaw-a* sat beside her, his wife saw a large black bear on the other side of the creek, coming down to the water to fish. She told her husband, who bade her fetch his bow and arrow. When she had brought them, wondering what he intended to do, he told her to point the arrow at the bear; he was going to shoot. She obeyed; as *Qwaw-a* felt the taut bow-string beneath his fingers he almost forgot that he was blind; the zest of the hunter had returned to him. He loosed the arrow; it struck the bear, killing it instantly, without a sound, but his wife lied, telling him that he had missed it, and mocking him for his failure, with the intention of securing all the meat for herself. As soon as an opportunity presented itself she slipped away, skinned the animal, and soon had the flesh sizzling before the fire.

Qwaw-a smelt the cooking.

"I smell fresh killed meat," he said.

"You dolt," his wife replied. "What are you talking about? You can't shoot."

When the woman again moved away to superintend her cooking, a supernatural being, who had seen *Qwaw-a*'s misfortunes, took pity on him and rubbed his hands over his eyes, restoring their sight. As he gazed around, amazed at his good fortune, he saw his wife bending over a box in which bear meat was boiling, greedily eating the grease which she skimmed from the surface of the water. He was so angry at her meanness that he crept up behind her, noiselessly, and thrust her head down into the boiling liquid where he held her until she ceased to struggle. She was dead. Then *Qwaw-a* tore her clothing, her flesh, even her bones, into small fragments which he scattered to the winds in all directions.

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"From this time forth," he said, "you will appear to humans only as Lynx."

Owing to the power which *Qwe-a* had obtained his words came true; each fragment became a lynx, and the animals so created were the progenitors of all lynxes.

After killing his wife, *Qwe-a* went to live in a village near the mouth of Rivers Inlet where he promptly married a very beautiful woman. She had three brothers with whom *Qwe-a* used to go hunting with great success. One day one of them suggested that they go to *Qwkala* Island for sea-lions which were plentiful there. The four set out together but, although all hunted, *Qwe-a* alone was fortunate. This continued success aroused both the shame and the jealousy of his brothers-in-law so that they determined to maroon him on the island in hope that he would soon perish. They waited until *Qwe-a* had killed so many sea-lions that the canoe was filled with their meat; then they pushed off suddenly when he was some distance away inland. The youngest of the three brothers, a mere lad, took no part in this scheme, in fact he was bitterly opposed to it, and could only show his sympathy by knotting his cedar-bark cape into a bundle and throwing it ashore so that *Qwe-a* would have at least that much protection.

When *Qwe-a* saw the canoe drawing away from the land he came hurrying up, but the paddlers did not stop in answer to his calls. Then he realized that he was abandoned by his false comrades and sat down to weep, wrapped in the cape which his youngest brother-in-law had thrown him. For a long time he sat crying on the beach. Then he walked a little distance inland to a place where there were some large flat stones, against one of which he rested his head and cried again. He was very disconsolate. All night he wept, so miserable that he could not sleep. The next night as he lay sobbing with eyes closed he felt someone kick his foot, and heard a woman's voice.

"Come, get up," it said. "Come to our chief's house, he wants to see you."

When *Qwe-a* opened his eyes there was no one in sight. He lay awake for a long time, greatly puzzled, but at last began to cry once more and finally fell into a broken slumber. Again he was aroused by the kick against his leg, again he heard the same voice, repeating the same message, but as before no one was in sight when he moved. Determined to solve the mystery, he made a small hole in his cape and once more lay down, pretending to be asleep. Presently he saw a pretty girl approaching. He had deceived her by peeking through the aperture. *Qwe-a* did not move to frighten her.

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"I see you," he called out from beneath his cape, "don't run away."

The girl did not vanish, but repeated her invitation. [illegible] got up and followed his strange guide, who pushed against the stone which he had been using as a support for his back and head. It returned, revealing a house, with a chief sitting behind the fire. It was the home of the sea-lions. The chief gave [illegible] a mat and invited him to sit down. He did so, with his legs bent at the knees so that they almost touched his chin. [illegible] could see no one except the chief and his guide, but he could feel people passing and repassing beneath and over his folded legs, as if they did not need the support of the ground to walk on. He could hear the comments of those who were moving around:

"How very strange! He is full of holes."

This referred to the space between the lower side of his knees and the floor.

The sea-lion chief, whose name was [illegible], planned to send [illegible] home. He suggested borrowing gull's canoe, by which was meant the frame and personality of a gull, for this purpose.

"Don't do that," cried the sea-lion woman, "it is no good, for its bow, the bird's beak, is always dipping down.* Lend him yours."

[illegible] then lent [illegible] his own canoe, a sea-lion's stomach. When [illegible] had crawled within, [illegible] inflated the craft by blowing into it, and then tied it securely so that no water could enter.

"If you strike a stone," he told [illegible], "just wriggle a little so that the canoe can clear the obstruction, then it will go on. When you reach the mainland you will be able to tell that you are there by the incessant bumping; your wriggling will be able to send the craft only a few inches at a time, and you will feel that you are against a solid, but shelving bank. Then it will be time to get out."

With these instructions [illegible] set off, the canoe travelling without visible motive power. Once he struck a stone on the bottom, but when he wriggled slightly the craft cleared off and moved on once more. Finally, he came to a place where he felt constant bumping and concluded it was the shore. Cautiously untying the neck of his canoe he saw the sun, then opened it further and found that he was near the beach of his wife's village. He went ashore and slew his two brothers-in-law who had tried to murder him.

[illegible] was able to make this strange voyage because Sea-Lion had made him a shaman.

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*In flight the heads of loons are bent downwards, whereas those of gulls are carried straight; it is possible that a bird of the former species was referred to.

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THE LAD WHO WAS MADE A SHAMAN BY THE SALMON

Once upon a time a lad named *Anulxalim* suggested to a number of his friends that they come and play with him on the river where the spring freshets were carrying away the ice. The youths played happily, jumping from block to block, but *Anulxalim* excelled them all, as he had made for himself a hooked stick with which he was able to leap easily from one distant cake to another. All went well until he leapt to a large chunk of ice from which he could not return to shore, and on this he was carried out to sea. He sat down, pondering on his fate, until he was transported across the ocean to the land of salmon. There he found himself before a large village in which a number of people were living and working; these were salmon. *Anulxalim* landed, and, being hungry, made his way to the house of the chief who told him to take a young boy and a young girl and throw into the water, first the boy and then the girl. This *Anulxalim* did. As soon as the boy touched the water he changed to a salmon, jumped above the surface four times, and swam back as a fish to the shore so that the thrower could lift him from the water with his hands. When he threw in the little girl exactly the same thing happened. Following the instructions of the salmon chief, *Anulxalim* cooked the male salmon without cutting off either the head or the tail. After eating the flesh he threw all the bones back into the water, where they at once assembled to form a live salmon which jumped four times, then became a boy once more and swam back to the beach. In like manner he cooked the female salmon, ate as much as he desired and threw the bones into the water, where they formed a salmon which jumped four times and swam back to the shore as a girl, but when she landed *Anulxalim* discovered that she was blind in one eye. He searched where he had been eating and found a morsel of the white of the salmon's eye which had fallen to the ground and been overlooked with the other debris. He took this and threw it back with the girl into the water. Then she returned to the shore with both eyes normal.

The salmon chief told *Anulxalim* that he desired to visit the Bella Coola River, since only steel-head salmon frequented it at that time, and they were bad because they shed their scales in the ocean. *Anulxalim* approved strongly of the project. They prepared canoes, one for each kind of fish, and set off in order of their proper arrival in the spring. The spring salmon led, carrying in his canoe *Anulxalim*, who had become a fish for the occasion. In due course they reached the Bella Coola River where *Anulxalim*'s father, [illegible], was on guard at his weir. He saw a very large, fine salmon drift over his weir and wished that he could catch it; in fact he told his neighbours how beautiful and peculiar it was, not knowing, of course, that it was his own son. That day *Anulxalim* did

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not enter his father's fish-trap, but he did so the next and allowed himself to be caught, much to the fisherman's delight. *[illegible]* used some of his power to guide his father's thoughts; in consequence, instead of cutting off the head, he carried the whole fish gently to shore by a loop, and then took it home. *[illegible]*, on entering the house, called out to his eldest son:

"I have caught the salmon I spoke about yesterday, it is a beauty."

His son went out to see the wonderful catch and cried out in wonder: "Why, it is my younger brother."

[illegible] had again assumed human form. All the people of the village came rushing up to see the returned youth and were amazed on learning that he had come back as a salmon. *[illegible]* directed them to make clean the house and he was carried in when this was done. He walked four times around the fire and thereby regained his strength.

[illegible] had now become a shaman. He carried a stick with which he had only to go through the motions of casting at anything, and the creature at which it was pointed fell dead. Accompanied by his brother, the shaman set out to hunt mergansers. He killed so many by means of his supernatural power that the shelter in which they were staying was soon filled with feathers. Then *[illegible]*, saying that he desired to go aloft, told his brother to beat with a stick on the feathers and continue doing so until he, the shaman, had disappeared from sight. As the lad started beating, *[illegible]* became lighter and lighter until finally he drifted up above. He had told his brother not to be frightened because he would return in a day, but he did not do so; in fact it was a year before he came back to earth, a single day in the land of the supernatural. When the year had elapsed, there was a thud on the roof and in came the shaman who took a bear's robe and danced. During his absence he had obtained help from the supernatural beings which made him even more powerful than he had been before. When he sang a song telling of his experiences, *[illegible]* stood up and asked a chief to give *[illegible]* one of his daughters as wife.* The one thus requested told the shaman to choose whichever of his three daughters he desired. He chose one of them and they were married. Soon after that, he took a number of young men with him to the mountains to hunt mountain goats. Through his magical power, the shaman soon killed six, which the young men carried to the village as a present to his wife's parents and a little later he gave them a goat-skin blanket. Hunting was so easy for *[illegible]* that he killed and gave meat to anyone who asked him to do so; in due course he became a wealthy chief.

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*This part of the story has not been recorded in full detail.

THE LAD WHO WAS HELPED BY A SALMON

# 534 Long ago there lived in a place called *[illegible]*, twelve miles below
# 987 *Stuie*, a poor orphan boy who was cared for by some charitable people.
# 956 One day several sons of chiefs were playing near a waterfall in a neighbouring creek and cruelly threw their playmate over the brink so that he was swept down into the rapids of the main river. The youths made no effort to conceal what they had done, and their parents did not even upbraid them, since their victim was of no importance.

Instead of being drowned, the boy fell down through the falls under the whirl of the rapids as if he had passed through a roof into a new land. A cohoe salmon had taken pity on him and so preserved him. The fish told the boy to gather splinters from firewood and touch with one of these the big toe of each of the youths who had thrown him in. He further told his guest to take his own name, *[illegible]*, Cohoe Salmon, and with it the prerogative of a kusiut dance.

After four days the salmon took the boy back to his home, and in spite of his long immersion he was not even wet.

Eager to try his shaman's power, for that was what he had received from the salmon, the lad gathered splinters unmolested; the people saw him but did not understand his purpose. That night he went to one house, and with a sliver touched the big toe of each of those who had tried to murder him, and of those who had condoned the offence; each absorbed a splinter and died. The next night he dealt with those living in the next house, and so on, until all his enemies had been killed. Obeying the salmon, he was careful only to slay those who had taken part in the action against him. In later years he received visions and became a noted shaman.

THE MAN WHO WAS HELPED BY A RAVEN

Some two hundred years ago there was a sickness that attacked only the chiefs; no one knows what it was, but the old people said it resembled the smallpox, which later visited Bella Coola.

At that time a certain man was very sick and ready to die. Weary of life he went off and lay down in the forest on the south side of North Bentinck Arm, not far from its head.

A raven came to him and picked out one of his eyes, saying as he did so:

"Get up! Get up! You are all right now, take the name *[illegible]*."

This means, "Restored to Life through the Raven."

The man returned to his village a successful shaman, and gave a shaman's dance in the usual manner, but thenceforth he had only one eye.

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His benefactor was *Ƚiitcāplilān-a*, who had thus helped him, appearing in the guise of a raven.

A BELLA BELLA SHAMAN

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A certain Bella Bella man frequently had visions and other unusual experiences, as a result of which it was assumed, both by himself and by his friends, that in time he would become a shaman. Once, when on a visit to Victoria, this young man got drunk and, with three companions who were brothers, took a short cut across a bridge to the house where he was staying. His comrades, jealous of his growing power, had decided to kill him; they threw him off the bridge, but he fell through the water and lay on the mud at the bottom, realizing his position but unable to rise. He heard a humming that seemed to descend in a spiral course until it struck the water. This sound, made by a supernatural being, drew him to the surface and then to the bank whence he had come. The man continued his way alone, feeling that he had now become a shaman. He went to the house of a married friend and asked his wife for a new blanket, giving her no explanation. The request was because he had been raised from the dead.* Telling his host that he would be absent for several days, the man took the blanket and went to the outskirts of the town, where he made a rude bed for himself in a thicket among the refuse heaps. For three days and three nights he lay there without eating. The supernatural being with whom he had been in contact caused his stomach to swell until it became so enlarged that he gasped from the weight of it, and finally, as he bent forward, he vomited a prodigious number of snakes, toads, and sea-eggs. This happened on the fourth day. Then he returned to his friend's house and gave back the borrowed blanket.

The man to whom these experiences had come was very angry at his attempted murderers, and decided to show his power by killing their father instead of themselves. Next day he left for Bella Bella on the steamer. At that time there was no wharf, so he was able to land secretly in a canoe and go by night to the house of his intended victim, the unsuspecting father. Climbing to the roof, the shaman was able to look down through the smoke-vent at the man whose doom he was plotting. He threw his stick, wherein lay his power, and struck the old man dead. His work accomplished, the stick jumped back to its owner, leaving no trace of a wound on the body. The shaman threw it away to prove that the power which had been in it had returned to himself, and that consequently the object was of no value. He demonstrated his power on many occasions, and for years was the most famous shaman in Bella Bella.

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*The informant could add nothing more to this bare statement.

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When this shaman reached middle age he was eclipsed for a time by a brilliant young practitioner. The latter made a striking exhibition of his power by giving a dance during which he rushed from the house and walked out on the water. Standing at some distance from the shore, he made motions with his feet as if he were scraping a hole in soft earth, and slowly sank under the surface as he "dug" downwards until he disappeared from sight. The people continued to watch, and after several hours his head appeared at the spot where it had vanished. He lifted himself from beneath the water, as if he were elbowing his way up through soft earth, until he stood on the surface where he shook himself, scattering immense quantities of dry eagle down until it lay thick over the whole vicinity. He had worn some when he went below the water, but that quantity was negligible in comparison with the amount, all dry, which he brought with him from below. Then the new shaman returned to the house and continued his dance, while the older, who had been thrown off the bridge in Victoria, admitted that he was outdone by this upstart.

Not long afterwards a steamer arrived at Bella Bella carrying a man sick with smallpox, the first case known there. Large presents were offered to the young shaman if he would cure the sufferer. He undertook the task, and treated the patient during the night, but the man died before dawn. This was a terrible blow to the shaman's prestige, so he called in the people and made a speech.

"You have seen my powers," he said. "Why do you doubt me even after this failure?"

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Then he committed suicide by shooting himself with a musket.[11]

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THE YOUTH WHOM *Sā·lma* BEFRIENDED

A long time ago, a poor orphan was living in a village where there dwelt a man who had a great affection for him, and who used to help him in every possible way. The man was a shaman, and the boy secretly practised earnestly in hope of obtaining the same power. This necessitated long absences from the village, but though these greatly puzzled his bosom companion, the son of a chief, the would-be shaman never told him of his ambition.

At this time the son of an important chief in a neighbouring village died, and all prepared to go to the funeral. The poor boy now confided to his friend what he had been doing, saying, moreover, that he had acquired power and might be able to restore the dead. The two went to the dead man's house, where the coffin was lying near the hole in the floor, ready for removal to the grave. The lad had happened to meet the

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[11] It was shortly after this that the epidemic of smallpox reached Bella Bella, so the date of the event must have been about 1860.

supernatural being *Sā·lma* in the forest, and from him had obtained shaman's power. *Sā·lma* usually is malevolent, but even this was not the only occasion on which he showed kindness. The shaman alone could see this supernatural being seated, as is his wont, upon the coffin. He bade his friend enter the house and ask the people to make an aisle for him. This he did, explaining the reason. He added that though he had known the poor boy for years there were periods for which he could not account, and that his friend now claimed to have gained power to restore the dead. The people listened eagerly and made an aisle up which he walked to the box. He thrust his shaman's stick, decorated with dangling shells, through *Sā·lma*'s nose-ring, lifted him from the coffin, and carried him to the hole destined for its passage. As he threw out the supernatural being, groans were heard from the coffin. It was opened and the dead boy was found to be alive. 539* 756* 787*

Sā·lma himself had instructed the youth to remove him in this way at the time he had given him shaman's power. Even when he was carrying away the supernatural being, none of the other people in the house could see his burden.

After this auspicious proof of his power, the shaman was frequently called upon, until he became wealthy, and was able to reach a position of eminence equal to that of his father at the time of his murder by jealous rivals.

THE FOUR BROTHERS

Long ago, though long after the earth had first been peopled, four brothers, whose home was in the lower Bella Coola valley, went for an excursion upstream, planning to call on their friends in the various villages. After travelling a considerable distance they came to a solitary house, which they entered. Its occupant, an old woman, gave them food and help.

"There is great danger where you are going," she said, "but if you are brave you will come to no harm." Turning to the youngest brother she continued: "Take these two mountain goat bladders.[14] One will give you heat when you need it; the other cold. You are now a shaman."

The woman was a supernatural being.

Continuing their journey after leaving her house, the four presently saw Great Blue Heron, who, in the form of an old man, was spearing salmon. His face had the design of the rainbow, consisting of diagonal paintings from his right eye to his left jaw-bone. Great Blue Heron had the ability to assume this face at will.

The shaman now said to his brothers: "I will rob Great Blue Heron."

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[14] These were commonly used as containers for liquids or grease.

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Accordingly, he changed himself into a fine salmon and swam close beneath the spot where the fisherman was standing. The latter cast his single spear and transfixed the lad, who merely drew his knife, severed the string which held the harpoon-head to the shaft, and swam back to his brothers with the trophy, as if it were in his pouch. One of the brothers placed the head, a very fine one, in his carrying-box; then they continued their journey.

After this loss, Great Blue Heron hurried home to weep. He supported his wife and children on the fish which he speared, hence the loss of his only harpoon-head was a crippling blow. He and his children were all crying together when the four brothers entered.

"Woe is me!" he moaned out to them. "I have lost my harpoon-head, and without it I cannot get food for my children. They will starve. Oh, how disconsolate and miserable I am!"

The four brothers said nothing. Presently Great Blue Heron continued:

"I don't suppose, by any chance, you happen to have such a harpoon-head."

"Perhaps," answered the shaman. "There is one in my carrying-box resembling what you describe. Please look at it."

When Great Blue Heron had done so he burst out, "Good gracious! It is exactly like mine. The two must have been made on the same day."

Great Blue Heron tried to buy the harpoon-head from the four brothers, but they would accept nothing for it except his rainbow-face, which gave him the power of extraordinary vision. It was hanging on the wall of the house, a much-valued possession, with which the fisherman hated to part. As the shaman would take nothing else, he at last sadly consented to exchange it for the essential harpoon-head. The four brothers laughed at the old man's grief and continued their journey.

Presently, on the sandy beach of the river, they met the son of *snkwmai-i*, a boy so fat that as he waddled along his stomach almost reached the ground. He was on his way to *Nuskiagek* to catch salmon. Filled with mischievous amusement at sight of the corpulent one, the four brothers determined to bury him. They dug a hole in the sand in which they left him, with only his face showing, unhurt but unable to move. They did not know that his mother, the supernatural *snkwmai-i*, had been able to see the deed, thanks to her wonderful eyesight.

In a short time the four brothers reached her house.

"Have you seen my son?" she inquired, after the usual greeting.

"No," they all replied.

snkwmai-i insisted that they must have seen him, and when they again said that they had not, she accused them of having ill-treated him.

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This brought *forth* another denial. Then, becoming still more angry, she used her supernatural power to chill the house. It became colder and colder until everything was coated with ice, while a whirlwind carried the brothers up into the *four* corners of the house. At this the shaman used his heat-giving bladder to drive away the cold and the *four* dropped to earth, none the worse for their experience. Then they told the truth to the angry mother.

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"Yes," said the shaman, "we did meet your son. But do not be alarmed. We did not hurt him, only buried him in the sand up to his neck, as a prank."

The *four* brothers went back and unearthed their victim, with whom they returned to his mother. *anlarman-i* forgot her anger in the joy of having her son restored and they all had a pleasant time together.

The brothers now continued their journey until they came to a house with a man sitting inside. They did not realize that they had been ascending and that this was *Ālquntäm*'s abode. He invited them to enter and gave them his daughter as a joint wife. Soon the house began to grow unbearably hot. *Ālquntäm* was conspiring to roast the mortals, and would have succeeded had not the shaman used the cold-producing bladder to lower the temperature. That night the *four* stayed with their father-in-law, sleeping in turn with their joint wife.

Ālquntäm did not realize that his guests were too strong for him. In the morning he set them what he considered impossible tasks, such as hunting large numbers of goats on the mountains; thanks to the shaman's power, however, the *four* young men were able to accomplish them all. Their wife tried to injure her husbands by transforming herself into a ferocious bear, which attacked them, but before the arrows of the youngest brother, it fell dead. Again she changed herself into a goat and succeeded in butting the shaman over the edge of a precipice, but he merely assumed the form of eagle down and floated up again. They brought back to *Ālquntäm*'s house a vast amount of goat flesh. The shaman announced that he was proof against all *Ālquntäm*'s wiles, but the latter, not convinced, tried once more to roast the brothers by building a fire beneath the house; this time, as before, the heat was powerless against the cold-giving power of the bladder.

Next day *Ālquntäm* asked the shaman, whom he rightly judged to be the cause of his failure to slay the *four*, to accompany him to cut firewood. The two went off in a canoe, while the three other brothers stayed in the house with their wife. *Ālquntäm* guided the canoe to the very centre of the ocean, where he asked the shaman to drive in a post he had brought with him. He did this easily with a sledge hammer such as is used for

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*539 driving stakes for olachen-nets, but at almost the last stroke it slipped from his grasp to the bottom of the sea. Then *Älquntäm* burst out angrily:

*756 "I have had that hammer for a very long time. It is a favourite of
*787 mine. I hate to lose it."

"I am very sorry, but it was an accident," replied his son-in-law.

[412] "Can you not recover it?" asked *Älquntäm*.

"I will try," answered the young man.

Accordingly, he dived into the sea. *Älquntäm*, who had been hoping for this, caused a thick coating of ice to form over the whole surface of the ocean, and went home, thinking he had seen the last of the troublesome young man. Such was not the case, for the shaman merely changed himself into a salmon, picked up the hammer in his mouth, and swam away, looking for a crack in the ice. Finding one at last he crawled up on top, where he became human again and returned to his father-in-law's house, very angry. *Älquntäm* was sitting warming himself before the fire, but when the shaman threw the hammer on the ground before him he disintegrated into dust, dead. Then the four brothers returned home, leaving their evil wife behind them.

THE FOUR BROTHERS

(*Second Version*)

Ke'laiānt, the youngest of four brothers, lived on the Kimsquit River. He was a very powerful man, able, through his supernatural talents, to change at will into any animal or bird. In his box he kept the necessary appurtenances for his transformations. One day, when travelling upstream with his three brothers he saw an old man spearing salmon from a river canoe. This was really Great Blue Heron in human form, and he was using a wonderful glass-like thing in his eye with the aid of which he was able to follow without difficulty the course of a fish beneath the water. *Ke'laiānt* desired to gain possession of this potent eye, so turned back, and in the guise of a magnificent salmon, swam upstream close to Great Blue Heron. The latter thrust at him with his spear, but missed. *Ke'laiānt* turned and swam down near the farther bank, then again went up near the canoe, this time allowing the fisherman to spear him. Great Blue Heron tried in vain to haul in his catch, but succeeded only in being drenched with water; at last *Ke'laiānt* cut the cord with his knife and swam upstream, where he re-assumed human form, still carrying the harpoon-head. Great Blue Heron went home weeping bitterly, and bade his wife and children do likewise, because his means of support had vanished.

An hour or so later the four brothers arrived at Great Blue Heron's house. Following the universal custom he offered them food, and, as

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they ate, he told them how he was ruined for life, having lost his only harpoon-head. He asked them whether by any chance they happened to possess an old one. One of the brothers answered:

"I think I have seen one in *Ko'laiānts*'s box."

They brought the box and opened it. There lay Great Blue Heron's harpoon-head though, of course, he thought it was only one just like it, especially when *Ko'laiānts* mentioned having had it for a long time. The host offered to buy it in exchange for dried salmon, which he said was all he had. *Ko'laiānts* refused, saying that he had plenty of smoked fish, and finally after further discussion, said he would accept nothing but Great Blue Heron's eye. The fisherman was very unwilling to part with this, though at last he agreed to do so, and sadly handed this treasured possession to *Ko'laiānts*.

The four brothers continued their journey up the bank of the river and presently saw a boy playing alone on a fine beach. In a spirit of mischief *Ko'laiānts* decided to work evil on him. No house was in sight.

"Have you a mother?" he asked the boy.

"Yes," was the reply.

"Where is she?" inquired *Ko'laiānts*.

"In the house," said the lad, indicating the direction in which his home lay.

Ko'laiānts used his supernatural power to make a hole in the sand, and in this he buried the boy, leaving his head alone above ground. Then the four brothers went on to the mother's house. She gave them food, according to custom, and asked if they had seen her son. They answered:

"No."

"That is strange," she said. "He was playing on the beach along which you must have passed."

"We did not see him," they replied.

She jumped to the conclusion that they had killed her son and in turn prepared to murder them. Her house differed from most in having a door which worked up and down, like the mouth of an animal, instead of sideways. It opened of its own accord when anyone approached, closing as soon as he had entered. The woman threw back this portal and exerted her power to cause cold winds. The cold grew more and more intense, and the wind increased in strength until the four brothers were blown into the four upper corners of the house against the roof. All but *Ko'laiānts* were frozen and swathed in ice; he alone escaped through his supernatural power which enabled him to scatter eagle down. He returned to the floor and said to the woman:

"I am too strong for you. Stop, or I shall kill you."

She realised that he was speaking the truth, so she caused the cold

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*539 winds to cease. The three frozen brothers fell back to the floor where
Ko'laiänts revived them. Then he sent out two of them to bring in the
*756 boy they had buried. When they returned, the mother overwhelmed
them with her gratitude and gave them many presents, even offering to
*787 become the wife of *Ko'laiänts*, who, however, declined to accept her.

THE FOUR BROTHERS

(*Third Version*)

[845] Once upon a time four brothers, one of whom was a twin and could accordingly change to a salmon, had friction with their family, and decided to go away from home. As they followed the trail along the bank of the river they saw a man spearing salmon on the opposite bank. He wore what appeared to be a transparent object, like an eyeglass, in front of one eye. The brothers watched him for some time and were amazed at his dexterity; with every thrust of his spear he impaled a salmon.

"I can transform myself into a salmon," said the twin.

The others did not believe him and replied:

"If you can, go and get the head of that wonderful spear."

"All right," answered the twin, and went down the river bank, out of sight. Presently the three brothers saw a large, beautifully marked salmon jumping in the river as it made its way upstream.

"Perhaps it is he after all," they said.

The salmon darted past the fisherman, who made a thrust at it and missed. He pulled in his harpoon and as he refitted the head he said, ruefully:

"I don't know what can be the matter. I have never missed before."

Meanwhile the salmon-man had unobtrusively gone downstream, keeping close to the bank where his brothers were watching. Then he went up, jumping as before, and again the fisherman struck and missed. Once more he slipped downstream, and on his third ascent he repassed close to the fisherman, who failed as before, and was, therefore, much troubled. Once again the twin went below but he allowed himself to be struck when he passed upwards the fourth time. Instantly a commotion arose. The water gurgled and boiled as the fish struggled; the fisherman could barely hold his grip, and was unable to land what he had caught. After a few minutes the salmon-boy drew his knife and severed the line, causing the fisherman to fall into the river. He clambered ashore and pulled in his rope as he watched the water for another sight of the strong fish, but it had disappeared. When, instead of the harpoon-head on which he depended for sustenance, he found only a cut line, the loss was so severe that, weeping bitterly, he went home and told his wife and

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daughter of his misfortune. They, too, cried bitterly. All were puzzled to know what kind of a salmon it could have been which had secured the spear-head, for the rope had been cut.

Meanwhile the twin had swum downstream again, and there transformed himself back to a human being before he rejoined his brothers, bringing with him the harpoon-head. He gave it to his eldest brother who concealed it under his cloak. The four continued their journey and presently saw a house on the other shore. They crossed the river and entered, finding within the weeping fisherman with his wife and daughter. He told the wife to ask the strangers if they had not a harpoon-head.

"Perhaps, I don't know," said the twin. "I will ask my brothers."

He applied to the eldest who took the spear-head from under his cloak. The fisherman, dumbfounded at seeing a duplicate, related how he had lost his own and asked if they would not sell theirs.

"Maybe," they replied. "What will you give for it?"

"The four of you can marry my daughter, simultaneously," he said.

"No, that is not enough," the brothers answered. "It is a very valuable harpoon-head."

Then he offered them everything in the house, but they declined all until, finally, he told them sadly that he had nothing more. They had been waiting for this moment, and now said:

"We will give you the spear-head in exchange for your eye."

They meant the transparent, eye-like object which he had taken off and hung on the wall where they saw it. The request greatly troubled him.

"That eye," he said, "enables me to see salmon at any depth beneath the surface of the water, no matter how turbid it is. Please take something else."

"No," the brothers replied. "You have nothing else that we want."

Finally the unhappy fisherman went slowly to the place where hung his eye, took it down, and sorrowfully exchanged it for the spear-head, telling the brothers what a valuable possession they were acquiring.

The fisherman was Great Blue Heron, and the "eye" his bill.

These three versions are some of the forms in which this popular story is related; a fourth, obtained from another informant, states that the theft of the harpoon-head occurred soon after the beginning of time. The supernaturally endowed twin is called *Ka'laitem*, and Great Blue Heron, *Snuqalaqs*, which is said to be his *[illegible]* name. Following the loss of his harpoon-head, the fisherman happens to visit *Ka'laitem's* house, where he sees his treasured possession on the wall; he ultimately retrieves it in exchange for his rainbow-eye.

WHY WINTER COMES

* 539 In the beginning, five people came to earth as golden eagles at a point above the present site of Firvalē.[*] Their names were *Māsonqʷ*, × 756 *Kāmālsonqʷ*, *Sonxwatlkus*, *Sonxwan-a*, and their sister, *atlxwan-i*. This * 787 woman had enormous power which she used malignly, attracting storms, and doing other evil things. So her *four* brothers threw her two miles down the valley into the narrow ravine where the old foot-trail used by the Carriers leaves the Bella Coola valley and goes up the mountains to [103] reach the rolling interior country. This barren gorge is known to this day as *atlxwan-i*, and it is subject to the most severe winds in the whole district. Here the woman lived and bore a son, whose name has been forgotten.

At this time *four* brothers living in *Q̣omqo-ts*, depressed by a serious dispute with their father, decided to leave home, never to return. They set off up the valley, following the only trail. It so happened that *atlxwan-i* had sent her son down to collect ocean food, and the *four* brothers met the youth on the way. After he had answered their questions as to where he was going and why, one of the brothers suggested that they bury him in a large, dry hole. They did so, covered him with branches and earth, and then continued their journey eastward. Presently they saw the house of *atlxwan-i*, into which they peered through a crack in the wall. The woman did not see them, but at once became aware of their presence, and bade them enter through the door. In reply to her questions, they told her whence they had come, and then she asked them if they had seen her son.

"No," answered the four.

"That is strange," said *atlxwan-i*. "There is only one trail up and down the valley."

The brothers still denied having met the boy, but she became suspicious and accused them of having killed him. She felt under her clothing for a small pump which she always carried concealed near her groin, and worked it until the house began to grow cold. As she continued, it grew colder and colder, until an icy wind swept the brothers into a corner, where they fell to the floor, numb and helpless. One retained sufficient consciousness to gasp out a confession, when she asked again what they had done with her son, adding that he was still alive, though they had hidden him in the ground. *atlxwan-i* then stopped the cold and built up her fire, so that the brothers gradually recovered their strength. As soon as they were able she sent them back to exhume her son and bring him back to her.

In her delight at his safe return she said:

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[*] About thirty-five miles up the Bella Coola valley, a short distance below Stuie.

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"I am very glad. I bear you no ill-will, because I understand that you buried my son merely as a thoughtless prank. The place to which you are bound is very bad. No ordinary traveller ever returns from it, but I am going to make you shamans."

So saying, she took her pump and put it in a sack, which she gave to the four brothers, who continued their journey. Soon they came to a house, *Nusmät-a*, though they knew it not. Peering through the cracks they saw within a man, *Ālpantim*, who invited them to enter, saying that he knew they had come because they did not get on well with their father. As *uskwmaa-i* had warned them, he invited them to sit down in a certain place in the house, while he went out. He came back attired in his dance regalia, and as he performed, the house began to warm up. He again withdrew, to return with other dance clothing, and as he danced in it the heat increased. *Ālpantim* repeated this procedure four times; the heat was so stifling that the brothers could hardly breathe, until one of them worked the pump given to them by *uskwmaa-i*. Almost immediately they felt relief. *Ālpantim* continued his dance, and a great combat went on between the cold and the heat until finally the latter was vanquished. *Ālpantim* was driven by the cold into a corner where he admitted his defeat, adding:

"You are the first that ever overcame me. Take whatever you desire of my goods or of my power."

Awed by their experience, the four brothers returned to Bella Coola. Owing to the successful conflict with *Ālpantim*, the frost and cold of winter annually return to vanquish the heat of summer, which otherwise would destroy all life. [821]

THE MAN WHO RECEIVED POWER FROM THE MOON[56]

Long, long ago a certain man, *Xekwmtam-a* ate black hawthorn berries for four days, knowing it would render him susceptible to visitations from the supernatural. He returned every night to his father's house to sleep, and on the fourth night he made a small hole in his blanket, so that when he pulled it over his head he was able to see, though he appeared to be asleep. As he watched he saw a mouse approaching, and said to it:

"Don't hide. I see you."

The mouse then became a woman and carried *Xekwmtam-a* in a canoe to the house of the Moon, whence she had come. The Moon rubbed his hands over the face of *Xekwmtam-a*, thus making him a shaman; he also gave his guest a small salmon, which had the power of stilling the roughest

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[56] This story was obtained from a man in his dotage. He was almost valueless as an informant and the following must be regarded merely as an outline.

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seas. At the Moon's invitation, *Xekwotsan-a* built his own fire in the house and settled there, never returning to earth.

On one occasion *Xekwotsan-a* attacked *Kāmai-ts*, the supernatural woman to whom all mortals are as slaves. She lived in some distant, uncertain part of the upper regions, or perhaps on this earth. He defeated her and pulled off her ears, but when he threw them into the water they caused it to boil and seethe so that his canoe was almost swamped. He threw out his supernatural salmon to quiet the waves and thus escaped. At that time the dead lived in *Kāmai-ts*'s house, and *Xekwotsan-a* rescued his deceased mother from near *Kāmai-ts*'s gigantic hat. Then he set fire to the woman's house and sent her down to this earth, where she was turned into stone.

THE WOMAN WHO MARRIED A BEAR[97]

Long, long ago, but after the first people had come to this earth, a woman who was out gathering berries lay down and slept on the ground. When she awoke she found that she had been lying on bear droppings and in her annoyance she cursed the one responsible for them. But bears have extraordinary powers of hearing, and the offender heard her remark and was angry. He assumed the form of a man and went to her, asking, with many profane expressions:

"What do you mean by swearing at my droppings? Defecate and I am certain you will find mine the better."

The woman did as she was bidden, while the bear-man watched her. Determined to outdo him, she managed to substitute some goat's grease for her own excrement without his observing her. When he saw it he admitted that he was out-matched and said:

"Come home with me."

[823] This she agreed to do. As mountains are really hollow, he lead the woman inside one, where she realized for the first time what her lover was, for he introduced her to his bear-wife. The two received the woman in a kindly fashion and prepared what they said was spring salmon, though in reality it was skunk cabbage. To the chagrin of her host, the guest refused it, whereupon he inquired what she would like. Looking around she saw some cohoe salmon which, at her request, was toasted for her; on this she made a hearty meal. That night she slept with the bear-man.

Meanwhile the woman's family was greatly alarmed at her long absence and scoured the woods in vain for her. Her four brothers in particular sought diligently, but at length even they gave up in despair, concluding that she was dead. The morning following her introduction

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[97] For another version of this story see Boas, p. 111.

to the bear-man's home she awoke, thinking she had slept but a single 539 ▸
night, for she did not realise that a night to the supernatural ones is a 756 ▾
year to mortals. Her bear-host asked which of her brothers she would 787 ▾
prefer to see.

"The eldest," she replied.

"No," responded the bear. "He is a shameless man who is wont to sleep with his wife at all periods."

"Then I should like to see my second brother," she said.

But again the bear refused, saying: "He spends all his time combing his wife's hair to make her appear beautiful. Choose your youngest brother; he is the best of the family."

To this she agreed, so the bear threw out his power and compelled the youngest brother to pass near the hiding-place. While they were still at a distance, the bear saw the man and his dog, whereat he pointed them out to the woman, who threw a snowball down the hillside for the dog to chase. After a fruitless pursuit it returned to its master. Another snowball was thrown, which again the dog failed to retrieve. When this was repeated four times the man concluded that a bear must be near.[illegible] He crawled up until he saw his sister, in the guise of a bear; he had even fixed an arrow on the string ready to shoot when she assumed human form and greeted him. He was delighted at finding his long-lost sister, and she was amazed at hearing that she had been absent for a year. She took her brother into the mountain to get her basket and pack her goods, but he was unable to see the town of the bears until she rubbed her hands over his eyes. Then it became visible to him also. They returned home together, where she recounted her marvellous adventures.

At that early period there was less distinction between men and [825]
animals than now exists; each understood the language of the other, but though bears have retained their original supernatural powers man have degenerated to such an extent that they can no longer communicate with animals.[illegible] It was true, men shot animals, but that was because Alkuntäm had allotted them to men as food. The bear had chosen the woman as his mate because she was still a virgin, and therefore not contaminated by too much of the essence of humanity. Through intercourse with this supernatural being she became a shaman, with a knowledge of the wishes of bears, even then not properly understood. Her continence, followed by intercourse with the bear, gave her insight into the mentality of the animal. Following her mate's instructions, she taught her youngest

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[illegible] The story fails to explain why.

[illegible] This interpolation in the myth was added by the narrator, without solicitation, as a natural explanation of the facts described.

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brother the proper methods of hunting, and how to find bears when strengthened by chastity, without which no hunter can have success. He alone of her brothers was worthy to learn this, because he was still celibate. Among other things she taught him never to hunt bears with arrows feathered with owl feathers, because she had been told by her husband that one of his fellows shot with such a missile would remain dead, whereas one slain with an arrow tipped with feathers from any other bird would be reborn.

The woman and her youngest brother hunted constantly, and always returned with skins which they shared with everyone. The other three brothers were very jealous, though their own lack of success was due to their laziness, and failure to observe ceremonial chastity. At intervals the bear used to visit his human mate, and after a year or more she went away with him, never to return.

THE WOMAN WHO MARRIED A BEAR

(*Second Version*)

Long, long ago, a Carrier Indian girl was walking along a path at the back of the village when she saw some black bear's dung. She kicked it to one side saying aloud:

"Who is so dirty as to defecate here?"

Then she wiped her feet on the grass and went on. Presently, she met a handsome, well-dressed man, a stranger, who asked her if she had recently met anyone.

"No," she replied.

He invited the girl to come and visit him in his house, and she agreed to do so. The trail was long, but to her it seemed short, owing to his power. Arrived at his house, the stranger asked her to marry him and she consented. When it was bed-time the girl collected soft hemlock boughs to sleep upon.

"I never use such stuff," said her mate angrily, so she went out again and brought back devil's club, and gooseberry bushes, saying to him:

"I cannot lie on these."

"I always do," he replied.

Next, the man bade her collect fire wood, and she brought some dry windfalls from a slide, but he said:

"That does not hold the heat," and he sent her out again.

This time she brought back stones and he was pleased.

"That is good," he said, "I always use them. Now let us have a meal."

"I don't see anything to eat," she replied, but her husband pulled out some skunk cabbage, which he roasted at the fire and ate. He was a bear, and it was salmon to him. Then the two lay down to sleep. 539* 756* 787*

In midwinter, when they turned over, as bears are wont to do, the woman said:

"I should like my eldest brother to see where I am."

"He is no good," her bear-husband replied. "He has the characteristics of a woman in the skin of a man."

Then she asked to see her second brother, but to him also the husband objected, showering vile epithets upon him. The same followed her suggestion of the third brother, but to the fourth and youngest he agreed. So she willed that this one should come to where she lay. To him it seemed mere chance that led him to the spot, but when he saw his sister beside the bear he hastily killed the animal. All the villagers were summoned, and they soon cut up the meat, while wondering at what had happened to the girl. When they had finished she said to them:

"Go ahead with the flesh; I will follow with the skin."

This she draped over herself and began to imitate a bear so successfully that the dogs barked at her, startling the people who had gone ahead. At the village she told them to dry and stretch the pelt carefully; when these instructions had been carried out, the girl took the teeth and leg-bones, clothed herself in the skin and forthwith became a bear. In this shape she slew all the villagers except a younger sister and the youngest of her brothers, who was out hunting at the time. Through her marriage to the bear she had obtained such power that all were helpless before her except the younger sister, who was immune owing to being secluded on reaching puberty; her menstrual blood was her protection. The terrified child could only impotently watch the slaughter from her corner of the house.

When the brother came back, his shaman-sister was in human form, but quickly changed to a bear, and asked how he had obtained the grouse which he was carrying.

"I shot them with my arrows," he answered.

"I don't believe you," the bear-woman replied. "Hit that knot-hole with an arrow, or you are a liar and I will kill you."

The boy's arrow pierced the knot-hole. In some unexplained manner, he knew that his sister must be vulnerable in the part of the body where her power was located if he could only learn where that was. After finding an opportunity to ask the assistance of his youngest sister, he left the house. The little girl said to her powerful sister:

"I know you are immune except in one spot. Please show me where it is, so that I may guard you from harm."

The foolish shaman was deluded into pointing out her weak spot, the

539 palm of one hand. The conspirators had been hoping for such an indi-
956 cation, since it gave the information to the brother who was peering
789 through a crack. The younger sister persuaded the older one to hold up
her palms to the fire to warm them, thus giving the brother an opportunity to shoot through a knot-hole in the wall of the house. His arrow transfixed his sister's hand and she fell, helpless, whereupon he entered and slew her.

The surviving brother and sister abandoned their home and travelled for a very long time without seeing anyone. Finally, they settled on a
[186] mountain top and married. Since that time Carriers have married their sisters.[illegible]

THE MARRIAGE OF *Tlitcāplilān-a*'s DAUGHTER

Long ago, when the world was still sparsely populated, there were two poor orphans, a brother and sister, quite alone, without relatives. The boy, who was about eighteen years old, took great care of the girl. In summer, when the people scattered over the country in search of food, the two went together to catch and dry salmon for the winter. The brother
[251] had great success. He caught many fish which he suspended on a frame to dry, in charge of his sister, while he went away for four or five days. On his return all the drying salmon had disappeared.

"That is unkind of my sister," he said to himself, "to have eaten all those fish so greedily."

He went to bed without saying anything, but next morning asked her:

"Is it you who have eaten all our food?"

The girl replied in a frightened whisper:

"Don't speak to me about it. I am terrified. A supernatural woman stole it. I think it was *Tlitcāplilān-a*. I heard something approaching and hid myself. A huge woman came to the drying rack, her snout-like mouth ranged among the fish and sucked them down like lightning, while her teeth rattled as if they were loose in her jaws. She went away as soon as she had finished our salmon."

Next morning the boy bade his sister hide, as he was going to attack the robber of his food. He prepared a bow with a strong arrow and took up his position in ambush, overlooking the rack on which hung the salmon he had recently caught. Soon he heard a voice and presently *Tlitcāplilān-a* appeared, wearing a shaman's collar of dyed and undyed cedar-bark in alternate bands, plentifully sprinkled with eagle down. Her teeth rattled loosely in their sockets. When near the rack, her mouth formed itself into a snout with which she began to suck in the salmon with a horrible

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[illegible] This statement is undoubtedly a mere expression of Bella Coola contempt for their neighbours.

gurgling sound. The boy shot, the arrow pierced her left breast and she ran off with a shriek of pain. 539*

Calling to his sister not to be afraid, the boy set off in pursuit of the 756* wounded *Tłitcäplitän-a*. As he followed, he found tufts of dyed cedar- 787* bark and eagle down which she had dropped, and these he carefully picked up and fastened to his own bear-skin blanket, as if he were a shaman. Ignorant of the path which his quarry was taking, the boy followed blindly until she entered a huge house. Then he realized that she must have led him to *Nusmät-a*. He sat down outside, by a spring, and watched all the supernatural ones assembling inside the house to cure their wounded comrade. They did not walk into the house, merely materialized instantaneously there. All tried to help *Tłitcäplitän-a*, but not one of them could do so because the arrow, having been made by an inhabitant of this earth, was invisible to them, as theirs are to mortals. After some time one of *Tłitcäplitän-a*'s four daughters went out to draw water from the spring, beside which she saw the stranger, dressed as a shaman. She asked him:

"Are you a real shaman?"

"Yes," lied the boy, "if it is not too serious a case."

The girl returned to the house and told the other supernatural ones there was a man outside who claimed to be a shaman.

"Let us try him," they cried. "Some mortals are very clever shamans."

So they invited the boy to come in. He entered, but immediately fell senseless from the flashing light in Thunder's eye, as the latter passed near the wounded woman. After a time he recovered, only to fall senseless once more, this time from the gaze of *Snuiq*, who likewise flashed fire from his eye. When the effects of this too had passed, the lad began his work, watched all the time by the supernatural ones as a strange curiosity about which they were ignorant. The arrow was, of course, visible to him all the time; he merely felt it, however, then drew his hand back and began to dance in time to the beating of the supernatural ones. They joined him, he leading the way and dancing in the manner of human beings on this earth, while they all imitated what he did; it was a remarkable performance. A second time he drew near *Tłitcäplitän-a*, and this time broke off the point of his arrow, that was projecting from her back. He pulled out the shaft also, which he concealed under his cloak. The patient cried out that she felt as if a stick were being drawn from her back, but no one could tell what it was. The lad threw the broken arrow into the fire, and then rubbed his hands over her wound. She was cured forthwith, because he had the same power in dealing with supernatural beings as they have with men.

539 956 987 Previous to her cure, *Tlitcaplitana* had promised that whoever made her well should marry one of her four beautiful daughters. She now bade them stand up and told the boy to choose whichever he liked. The four were identical in appearance, and the youth was in a quandary, but a young supernatural being standing near advised him to select the third in age, saying she was by far the most capable. All had wonderful powers but she excelled her sisters, since, if she closed her eyes and wished to be in a certain place, she straightway arrived there. So the lad led this girl out from among her sisters and in a flash all the supernatural ones vanished, except *Tlitcaplitana* and her four children. The mother said to her new son-in-law:

"I suppose you will spend the night with us but will want to go back to your own home tomorrow morning."

"Yes," answered the boy. "I am afraid to be too long absent on account of my sister down below."

"Don't worry on her account," said his mother-in-law. "If she should be dead I will restore her, or rather your wife, my daughter, will do so. She has the necessary power."

That night the young man spent in the home of *Tlitcaplitana*. Next morning he and his bride set out for the earth, travelling on the same easy, short route by which he had reached *Nusmata*. He thought he had been absent for one night only, but one night among supernatural ones being equivalent to a year among mortals, his sister had died of starvation. His wife rubbed her hands over the dead girl's face and she was at once restored to life, greatly to the delight of the bridegroom and all his human friends.

Tlitcaplitana's daughter had brought with her from *Nusmata* a dog which she instructed to watch her husband and report if he so much as flirted with any other girl. She warned him that if he did so, or if he ever ceased to pay the proper respect to herself, she would leave him and return to her home above. For three years the husband obeyed her instructions, but one night he met a pretty girl and was faithless to his wife. The ever-watchful dog reported this to his mistress, who went back above and never returned to her husband.

THE MARRIAGE OF *Tlitcaplitana*'S DAUGHTER
(*Second Version*)

Long ago three brothers went off into the mountains to hunt goats. [251] They had tolerable success and hung up their quarry to dry, leaving *[illegible]*, the youngest brother, in charge. While the others were absent, *Tlitcaplitana* visited the camp and carried off the drying meat, the

[illegible]

[illegible]

guardian, terrified at the supernatural woman, not daring to protest. When the elder brothers returned with more game he told them what had happened, and they decided to keep up the game as before and watch. Presently, *[illegible]* returned and [illegible] shot at her, his arrow piercing and remaining in one of her huge breasts. The wounded supernatural one ran off, whimpering with pain, while the three brothers followed. Soon the two elder turned back, disheartened at her speed.

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[illegible] continued to follow *[illegible]*, guided by numerous small pieces of the dyed cedar-bark which she was wearing being plucked from her collar by the bushes during her rapid flight. The youth kept picking them up and finally braided them into a collar for himself. After a long time he came to a river, went up it until he was opposite a town in which he saw the wounded *[illegible]* surrounded by a number of supernatural beings, who were trying to cure her, though they could not see the cause of her pain. He rejoiced at what he had done, and began to plan how he could turn it to his own advantage. Presently the supernatural ones saw him, and thought he must be a member of the [illegible] society from the collar of dyed cedar-bark which he was wearing. They sent a messenger to him, who asked:

"Are you a [illegible]?"

"Yes," said [illegible], and the envoy continued:

"*[illegible]* has suffered an injury. We want you to help her. Please come across with me."

The boy refused and the messenger returned to the village. Then the youngest daughter of *[illegible]* came over and begged him to come to the aid of her mother, but still he refused. Next the eldest daughter came with the same request and he consented to go with her.

In the village all were trying to cure *[illegible]*. One after another, the different supernatural shamans danced in the hope of easing her pain, but none had any effect. Whenever anyone touched the arrow *[illegible]* groaned, but not one of them could see it. [illegible] listened to the various rhythms and decided that of the wolverine to be the best. When the supernatural beings asked his aid and offered to beat the time if he would tell them what it was, he lied, saying that his was exactly the same as that of the wolverine. They beat that for him as he danced to and fro, going to the wounded woman at intervals to shove the arrow slightly farther through her breast until the head of it emerged. He broke this off, drew back the portion of shaft remaining in the wound, and finally rubbed his hands over the flesh to restore the portions. Then he threw the broken arrow into the fire, but to those watching it appeared as if he merely went through the motion of throwing something, for the object was invisible to them, as are all things made by mortals.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
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tent, remembering what the latter had told him the previous evening. He dared not follow his friend's track, and, as night came on, closed the tent and went to sleep, with the dog beside him. When it was quite dark he was awakened by the sound of footsteps and the tapping of a stick, and concluded that his partner was returning. The tent-flap was untied, as if by persons entering, but *[illegible]* could see nothing, so he kicked the dog to waken it and the animal began to bark furiously. At length he heard the steps withdraw and grow fainter as they climbed the mountain. Then *[illegible]* realized that his friend was dead, and that it was his life, [illegible] round to visit his companions, which had come to him. Terrified, he lay awake all night with a blazing fire, and fled the next morning.

[illegible] chanced to meet several canoes soon after he had quitted the camp, and when he had told his story, their occupants turned back to hunt for *[illegible]*. About eighteen men searched all that day unsuccessfully, but a few days later another party found the corpse of the unlucky hunter. Presumably he had fired at the goat, though whether he struck it or not was not known, and the animal had charged. A wound in *[illegible]*'s groin showed where one of the horns had pierced him, and the two had rolled together to death over a precipice, the Indian being slightly uppermost in the fall.

Even if *[illegible]* had struck the goat it would not have availed him, for he was doomed to death. Not only had he taken great risks in hunting within one year of his previous experience, but his wife had been unfaithful during his absence. He had long practised continence, and thereby was in a clean condition such as is approved by animals, and other supernatural beings, but this very condition rendered him peculiarly susceptible to any breaking of taboos by his wife. She had so far forgotten herself as to indulge in carousing when he was on the mountain, so that his death was inevitable. *[illegible]*'s relatives were very angry and prophesied that she would soon die. They were right, though whether her death was caused by a sorcerer, or by the accumulative power of their thoughts, is a matter no one can determine.

THE *[illegible]*

In the beginning of time, when *Alquntam* sent down *[illegible]* to this earth, he used his own initiative and travelled to the east for abalone-shell and to the west for copper. On returning to his settlement, he determined to try to lure to it a supernatural being, of whose existence he was aware from his previous life in the land above. Accordingly, he hammered some of the copper into jingling bangles, which he fastened to the [illegible] of his infant's cradle. Before the introduction of white man's goods the Bella Coola were accustomed to tie a child in a cloth and suspend the bundle by ropes from a stick which projected horizontally from the wall. It was to these ropes that *Kalálka* tied the bangles, so that they jingled with every movement of the child. 539* 756* 777*

Alquntäm heard this peculiar noise from his house in the land above and sent a *[illegible]*, a diminutive supernatural being of human form, which lives on air, to investigate. The creature perched on the cradle rope where *Kalálka* saw it. Owing to his former life in the land above he knew what it was, and how to deal with it, so he quickly threw over it a blanket which he had frequently used.[illegible] This brought him supernatural good fortune. He concealed the *[illegible]* for safety in an old checker-work root sack, and left it lying on the floor. [777 754 776 777]

Wealth flowed in upon him so that he was able to give a potlatch every year. At one of them he gave his infant daughter, the occupant of the cradle, the name *[illegible]*, which has been handed down from generation to generation, and has recently been given to a Bella Bella child. *Kalálka*'s prosperity roused the jealousy of his fellows so that they murdered him, but his children still had the *[illegible]* and they continued to prosper. At last their enemies slew them too, sparing only one small boy. [551]

This orphan led a precarious existence. He was refused admittance to what had been his father's house and was forced to live in the space between the floor and the ground below, while his food was taken from the refuse heaps. In time he grew to young manhood, frequently brooding on the fate of his relatives and longing for revenge. One day he crossed the river, ascended a mountain, and found there a large cave, where he lay down to sleep, wrapped in a bear-skin. A supernatural being came to him.

"I have watched your woes," said the stranger, "and I will help you if you are brave. You must accompany me to my land. The road is dangerous, and if you should lose me it would be disastrous to you, so keep close."

They took a difficult path down through the earth to the land of the dead below.

"I will keep you here for a night and teach you," said the supernatural one as he gave the boy a stick in which was power.

"You must take this," he said, "and go at night to your father's house. Throw the stick at one of those who killed your father. It will rebound to you, after leaving your enemy dead without a mark on his body. Do this every night, killing only one man at a time, until you have slain all the murderers, but be careful not to harm anyone else."

Although he had not at first revealed himself, the being from whom

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[illegible] A new one would have been useless.

534 756 787 the lad received this shaman power was [illegible]. The boy spent one night in the land below, then returned to the village, carrying the stick with him. A whole year had, of course, elapsed since his departure, so the people suspected he had been trying to obtain power. When he did not display it at once, they jeered at him, but he said nothing. That night he killed one of his father's murderers in the manner which he had been taught, and did the same every night until all who had taken part in his parent's death had been disposed of. Thus he regained his father's house and became wealthy.

[557] The orphan had not only become a shaman through the assistance of [illegible], he had also acquired the name, [illegible], carrying with it a shaman dance prerogative, which has but recently been forgotten. The name was last used by the father of a man now living, but he disliked it on account of its similarity to the word for "death," [illegible], and accordingly, altered it.* The repository (II, p. 8) of the dance was the cave wherein the vision took place; it is still called, [illegible], "The Place of Death."

[557] [illegible] was not the only man to whom a [illegible] appeared in the beginning of time. One appeared likewise to [illegible] (I, p. 315), in consequence of which the name [illegible] has also been preserved by the descendants of this first man. From that time until recently none of the creatures have been seen. Early in the century, however, a certain man saw one when undergoing treatment at the Hot Springs; and in 1920 a youth saw another at a cannery, but failed in his efforts to catch it. As there is a tendency for such creatures to appear only to those whose ancestors have seen them, and there is no tradition of such an occurrence in this lad's family, he was possibly mistaken. Perhaps he saw only a mouse which demonstrated its supernatural power by appearing in a peculiar form.

THE GOAT HUNTERS

Four brothers, the youngest of whom was named [illegible], used to hunt mountain goats in the upper valley of the river which enters North Bentinck Arm at Green Bay. In some unknown fashion [illegible] realized that supernatural power had been granted to him, and accordingly determined to stay behind when his brothers went hunting. Every day the three went out after goats, but without success. They did not realize that this was because the youngest brother was keeping the dogs in camp by singing to them and giving them choice morsels of food. This went on for several weeks.

Then [illegible] said, "You stay in camp today, I will try my luck."

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[777] *Such a change would have been unthinkable before white influence had broken down the ancient customs.

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The unfortunate hunters were only too ready to agree. *[illegible]* set out at once and returned at nightfall with a single goat which they ate for supper. The following day he brought back two goats; the next day, three; then four, five, and six on successive days. He had received shaman's power from Mountain Goat, which enabled him to enter their houses, hidden from the eyes of most mortals, and throw out the meat. The three older brothers spent their time packing back to the village the large stores of meat which *[illegible]* brought to their camp.

But in time they became jealous of their brother's phenomenal success. One day they followed *[illegible]* and watched him climb a tall tree, which was like a ladder to him, and vanish into a precipitous cliff, in reality the entrance to a goat's house. The malicious brothers cut down the tree so that *[illegible]* could not return. He must have become immortal, because hunters passing the place in later years sometimes heard him singing from within the cliff, but he was never able to escape back to the land of mortals.

THE WOMAN WHO BEFRIENDED A WOLF

Not many hundred years ago, *[illegible]*, a woman of *[illegible]*, was picking blackberries. As she started to climb a steep bank to a shelf where she saw that the fruit was plentiful, she heard one of the berries speaking to its companions.

"Let's hide," it said, "that foul-mouthed woman is coming."

The berry was speaking of *[illegible]* and applied the epithet "foul-mouthed" because of her habit of munching berries as she picked, instead of putting all in her basket for future consumption.

[illegible] hurried up the bank so swiftly that many of the berries were unable to hide, and she saw them in their human form, a host of goggle-eyed little boys sitting on the berry shoots. On that occasion she obtained more than any of her companions. Thanks to her sight of the berries in human form, she was thenceforth able to see them in their hiding places and was accordingly always fortunate. She respected the wishes of the fruit, never eating as she picked, but chewing dried salmon instead.

On a later occasion the same woman happened to see a wolf giving birth to its cubs. In some way the delivery was being retarded so that the mother wolf was in agony; *[illegible]* unhesitatingly went to her assistance, an evergreen bough in each hand. First she drew forth the four cubs, one after another, and finally the after-birth. The grateful wolf gave her [illegible] the power of a shaman.

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This ability helped [illegible] to assist a wolf on another occasion, when the animal was choking to death on the bone-cap of some animal it had slain. All around were other bones which it had crushed successfully, but this one had somehow become wedged in its throat, an accident not uncommon to wolves. The woman inserted her hand and drew forth the bone; from these two experiences she received shamanistic power from wolves.

CHAPTER XI

MEDICINE, MAGIC, TABOO[1]

Introductory — Causative Medicines — Preventive and Curative Medicines — Amulets — Taboos — Ritual Acts — Miscellaneous Beliefs

INTRODUCTORY

THE beliefs described in the last chapter are essentially religious since they display an attitude of respect and often of propitiation to supernatural powers having greater strength than human beings. This is self-evident in the earlier sections and, though less noticeable, is present also in ideas concerning shamans since these men have themselves acquired ability placing them on a plane slightly removed from that of their fellows. Theoretically, it seems as if a clear division might be drawn between the concepts just recorded, and others of a magical nature in which, although the element of contact with the supernatural is present, yet the end desired is obtained by the mere performance of an action. To the Bella Coola there is a slight overlap between the two types. For example, the acquisition of an object from which supernatural good fortune may be secured is religious, but its use is virtually magical since once obtained, neither supplication nor further favours are necessary. Nevertheless, it is possible to separate most magical beliefs from most religious ones, though it must be emphasized that the cleavage is less distinct to the native than it appears to the white man. 771 789 [756] [777]

If it is difficult to find a clear dividing-line between religion and magic, it is impossible to draw one between the latter and 757 789

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[1] The late Harlan I. Smith has dealt with certain aspects of the subjects treated in this chapter in two articles: "Sympathetic Magic and Witchcraft among the Bella Coola" (*American Anthropologist*, vol. 27, n.s., Jan.-March, 1925, pp. 116-121) and "Materia Medica of the Bella Coola and Neighbouring Tribes of British Columbia" (National Museum of Canada, Annual Report for 1927, Bulletin 56, pp. 47-68). [113]

757 the science of medicine. The Bella Coola are *familiar* with
789 many acts which cause definite results. To place a new-born
girl in contact with the representation of a beautiful woman
856 so that she may grow up to be like her, seems false science,
752 magic, to the white man; whereas the application of splints
and gum to a fractured limb is a medical treatment, crude
perhaps, but definitely scientific. The two are identical to the
Bella Coola. They do not ask *why* or *how* a result follows,
they merely know that it *does*. Such lore has been handed
down from time immemorial; it is steeped in the sanctity of
antiquity and hallowed by the knowledge that their ancestors
have done the *same* for generations. All such acts may be
described as "medicines," for so they appear to those who
practise them. To separate them into magical and scientific
categories would misrepresent the native point of view; the
only division that can be made is between those that cause,
and those that prevent or cure. Even in this there is some
overlap. A medicine that cures a child from crying likewise
causes him to be placid and amiable; so, too, medicines of a
preventive nature comprise elements of both types. The principle
governing most of these is sympathetic magic, a concept
which, if put in words to the Bella Coola, would be regarded as
logical and scientific. The second important class of medi-
755 cines consists of objects, either herbal or derived from the
human body, which are believed to have such abundant power
that they are effective against ailments of supernatural origin,
or against supernatural beings themselves. Some of these have
already been mentioned in connection with the attitude of
the Bella Coola towards these beings of the earth, sky,
and water.

754 Most curative medicines are used by the practitioner on
himself; most causative, on someone else. The latter are either
755 social or anti-social, depending upon whether the result is
789 benevolent or malevolent. Shamans frequently use magical
means in curing the sick and are highly regarded by the community,
but medicines of the same kind may be used to kill

and those who have knowledge of them are sorcerers. Even 754
a man of this kind is not outside the pale of society unless he [755
practises indiscriminately; members of the *kusiut* society, for 784
example, frequently employ one to kill an individual who has
offended against their regulations (I, p. 740). A man is re- 576]
garded as a sorcerer not on account of his knowledge but on
account of the ends to which he applies it.

Closely related to, if not identical with, the belief that 784
certain consequences follow certain acts, is the conviction that the infraction of ritual prohibitions brings disaster. There are many such taboos, for so they may be called. Though most important at the critical periods of life, puberty, pregnancy, while observing ceremonial chastity, and so forth, there are many which must be obeyed at all times.

Restrictions pertaining to the river and regulations at birth and death have already been described. Like magical acts, these often verge on the religious owing to the belief that disregard offends supernatural beings. On the whole, however, it seems as if most infractions bring their own punishment
without intervention of higher powers, a concept which throws [784]
taboos into the category of magic rather than of religion, with the ever-present proviso that the two cannot be separated entirely from one another. With them may be considered a [788]
number of ritual acts connected with fishing and hunting in which, though the element of propitiation is not absent, it is satisfied by the performance of definite rites. Finally, there have been included in this chapter a number of unimportant beliefs, the psychology of which cannot be analyzed.

What is the basis of these rites defined as Medicine, Magic, 750
and Taboo? As already described, the Bella Coola either do 771
not explain their origin and function, or merely state that 789
Alquntam is responsible, as he is for every activity of life. This is unsatisfactory because many which, viewed scientifically, have neither curative nor causative power, produce the desired end. A child who has been "made" a carpenter during infancy, usually grows up to be proficient in that profession; the person

154 771 788 who has been "cured" of an illness, recovers; the man whose death has been "caused" by magic, dies. An average white man would consider such statements to be erroneous, but they not only figure in stories and beliefs, but some of them have been actually observed by the writer. The explanation lies in the susceptibility of the Bella Coola to suggestion. The conviction that he is to die so weakens a man that death often results; belief that he is to recover, aids a sick person to throw off the malady. This sentiment, intelligible in case of disease, is equally applicable in other matters. [868] The child who has been endowed with carpentry skill grows up with the conviction to assist his labours. Moreover, his relatives and friends are also aware of it, and he receives every opportunity to practise, so that the outcome desired is often the consequence of the act. 777 828 [771] Though the Bella Coola do not appreciate that psychological and sociological factors may be the real cause of the result, they realize the importance of the power of thought. For example, if a group of people is unanimous in wishing some end, or expects some event to happen, it is believed that their thoughts are strong enough to bring about its occurrence. The following examples illustrate this point:

It is said that when the white man first came to British Columbia, a tribe of Indians was living in a secluded valley, far to the north. As more and more settlers arrived, the occupants were driven from their homes and forced into the barren mountains. [777] One night, *Alquntam* came in a vision to one of the natives, saying:

"I see what you desire; you want the white man to withdraw. You, yourself, are helpless. But if all your fellows wish the same, the white man will depart."

The man told all his friends and they agreed to concentrate the next night on their wish to expel the white man. A few failed to do so, and nothing happened. The second night there was the same lack of unanimity. The desire to drive away the intruders grew stronger in course of time, until one night this was the centre of the thoughts of all; next morning the white man had vanished. It is possible that in this particular case there was a belief that *Alquntäm* granted the wish when convinced that all had the same desire, but this element is often entirely lacking. 776 778

Belief in the power of thought is a concept which the investigator constantly meets in Bella Coola at the present day. For example, in 1922 a government official working in the valley, purchased a representation of a [illegible] which had been used in a ceremonial.[1] Although this should have been destroyed after use, no difficulty would have been raised if the transaction had remained a secret. Unfortunately, the buyer allowed the object to be seen by several Bella Coola and by some Carriers. This caused indignation throughout the community and news of it reached the Bella Bella, who concluded that the vendor would suffer disaster for allowing a secret object to be seen by the despised Indians of the interior. Within a year, his wife died. The Bella Bella believed that his sin had brought its own punishment, but the Bella Coola, who knew the details of the sale and did not consider the exposure of the article to have been the fault of the seller, attributed it to the power of the thoughts of the Bella Bella. They all expected that he would be punished; therefore he was punished; the expectation was sufficient to effect its own fulfilment. This incident was too fresh in the minds of several men to allow them to sell ceremonial objects to the writer. 686 776 778 754 [761] [183]

The most common form taken by this conviction is with regard to death. If it is believed that a man will die, he is almost certain to do so. In June, 1923, a woman died in Bella Coola and her father claimed that she had been murdered by a certain man either with material poison or by magical means. He took no direct steps in revenge but stated emphatically that the man whom he suspected would die within a year. The threatened man knew of this, and more than once said that he 754 761 776 778 would probably fall a victim. He became ill in May, 1923, and, though treated by a white doctor, grew steadily worse until he died in the latter part of June, three weeks after the year had elapsed. All the Bella Coola firmly believe that this was due to the power of thought. The father of the woman was a powerful chief whose thoughts were accordingly potent, and some consider that his concentrated desires and expectations were enough to kill the servant, while others believe that his expressed statements convinced others of the result, and that it was their combined thoughts that caused the death. It usually requires the thoughts of more than one individual to lead to this effect. The doctor who attended this man stated that his patient had shown symptoms of melancholy and resignation during his last sickness; it seems clear that the expectation of death must have lessened his chance of recovery.

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[1] The article, now in the National Museum of Canada, consists of a cloth and wood representation of a [illegible] canoe such as was used by [illegible] in the beginning of time. [132]

A prominent theme in Bella Coola folklore is the belief that a person cannot long survive who has made himself unpopular. It is sometimes stated that a magical means was employed to remove him, and this was no doubt often the case; a person who knows that a "medicine" had been employed to kill him is in no fit mental condition to counteract the power of suggestion, particularly if he knows that others are aware of what has been done. His death is regarded as proof of the efficacy of the means employed and the belief of others grows stronger. As already stated, this conviction still survives. When this ethnological investigation was being conducted, a point under discussion was whether or not the Kimsquit people should be allowed to live in Bella Coola. One chief took the lead in objecting and everyone expected that, having thus roused the ire of would-be immigrants, he would die. He did so soon afterwards, and it is universally believed that it was caused by the concentration of the hostile thoughts of the Kimsquit. Similarly, the potency of taboos is increased by the fact that since time immemorial the thoughts of everyone have been opposed to any infraction. Consequently, an offender is liable to punishment both for breaking an injunction and because he

has gone contrary to something about which there has been 771
universal agreement for generations. 752

To understand Bella Coola medicines it is, therefore, neces- 754
sary to regard them as concepts deep rooted in tribal history, [754]
and made potent by the suggestibility of those who practise
them. This can be most clearly illustrated with regard to [755]
those effecting death, but is equally true with regard to all
medicines, whether curative or causative.

There remain for consideration the sociological aspects of 626
medicines. Knowledge of most remedies has been handed down 755
for generations as the property of ancestral families. Some are 757
acquainted with one or two "cures," some with many, and
some with none at all. The name of the discoverer of a particular medicine is usually lost in antiquity, though it is often
attributed to someone described in the family's myth. Like [614]
other possessions based on mythology, a remedy of this type
can be practised by any member of the group to which it
belongs. If it is observed that a certain individual is using
one of these successfully, others will ask him to apply it for
them. Payment is always expected, but the sum varies enor- [645]
mously, depending upon the efficacy of the remedy, the difficulty of operation, the generosity of the person benefited, and
so many diverse factors that no general conclusions can be
made. A patient may observe the details of the treatment,
but unless he is entitled to it, he would never dream of using
it himself. This is due not only to honesty, but to the conviction that only a person with the inherited right to a certain
cure can perform it successfully. Rarely, such knowledge is [616]
sold or given away outright, but, like other possessions of an
ancestral family, this usually leads to friction and jealousy on [625]
the part of those overlooked. Some of the simple herbal remedies are common knowledge and are used by all, since remembrance of their ownership, if it ever existed, has been lost. At
the present time it is difficult to learn details of proprietorship
of some medicines, but these are indicated whenever possible.

Causative Medicines

MEDICINES OF INFANCY

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To Cause Tallness

As soon as the umbilical cord is cut, blow upon it and pull it out; the infant will grow up to be tall and big.

The following medicines are applied four days after birth.

The infant is washed, formerly in a circular cedar or cottonwood basin, and the remedy pressed against its body while drying. Some families prefer to wait until the child is able to crawl.

To Cause Strength (three means)

[854]
[855]

(1) Collect four pieces of bark, each from a different tree where a grizzly bear has scratched. Place them in the infant's wash-bowl, then warm them at a fire and rub over his body. This ensures him the strength of a grizzly bear.

(2) Collect four water-smoothed, green stones from the river. Place them in the infant's wash-bowl, then warm them at a fire and rub over the body. *After four days*, return the stones to the river.

[855]

(3) Warm the body of an octopus, beaver, or wolverine in the smoke of a fire and gently press the carcass against an infant's body, saying:

"Please, may he be like you."

This provides the child with the strength of the animal used.

To Cause Long Life

[786]
[854]

Collect four pieces of wood which have been rolled hard and smooth in a landslide. Boil them in the infant's wash-bowl, cool, then re-warm them at a fire and rub them over the body. This makes him strong and healthy, able to endure all dangers and weaknesses even those caused by a sorcerer. The principle is that the child will be as hardy as the wood proved

itself to lie by withstanding the crushing weight of stone and 774
earth. An old Kimsquit man expressed the firm conviction 852
that his great age was the result of this treatment soon after 856
birth.
[854]

To Cause Imperviousness to Cold

Kill a water ouzel, warm it at a fire, then press it against 774
every part of the infant's body. This makes him as heedless 855
of cold water as the bird. A merganser may be used in the
same way, or the foot of one be placed in the child's hand and 856
parted as his fingers clutch it.

To Cause a Quarrelsome Disposition

Burn the nest of wasps and rub the ashes on the infant's face. [855]
He will become as bellicose and quick to resent injury as the insects. One old man who habitually beats his wife explains that this is involuntary, since he was treated in this way when a child. Fighting is no longer allowed, so the only person on whom he can exercise his martial ardour is his wife. The woman regards this treatment as a matter of course and the reason is accepted as valid by her associates.

To Cause Success in Thieving

Kill a pack-rat, warm it at a fire, and rub the carcass lightly over the infant's body. This will make him as successful a thief as the animal. Other methods are to cut off a foot and put this so the infant clenches it in his fingers, or to rub his hands with the ashes of a burnt rat.

To Cause Success in Singing

Catch a live robin or *[illegible]* (probably one of the 533
thrushes), warm it at a fire, and rub it lightly against the in- 774
fant's throat, saying: 855

"May he be a singer like you." 856

Then release the bird, and the child will grow up a songster.
The following story is told of the power of the *[illegible]*'s [539]
song:

538 In the beginning of time it used to sing,

944 "I shall use a spoon and eat when the Bella Coola River has burst its bounds on account of the teeming salmon in it."

125 The people used to laugh as it repeated this song year after year, 156 until the bird changed its note:

"I shall use a spoon and eat when all is cold and clear. Then there [534] will be Death instead of salmon in Bella Coola."

The next year the streams were so clear that no fish could be caught and the starving people asked the bird to return to its first song. When it did so, the water became murky so that it was possible to catch salmon once more.

The Bella Bella, not the Bella Coola, use the body of a blue jay to cause an infant to grow up with the ability to master difficult tunes in the same way that the bird has a variety of notes. The method of applying this medicine could not be learnt.

759 Most of the above medicines are well known and can be applied by any parent. If, however, a man has employed one 156 of them successfully on a number of occasions, he is often requested to use his ability for others. In such a case, the father of the benefited child is expected to reimburse his friend. [164] The application or non-application of such medicines is purely the concern of the child's family; they can use as many as they like, or none at all, according to their discretion.

The following medicines are used during the first year of life:

304 *To Cause Beauty*

759 Bandages of the softest undyed cedar-bark are prepared for infants of both sexes soon after birth. A woman who is a good 856 artist is requested to draw with charcoal two pictures on one 552 of the pieces of bark—of handsome men if the child is a boy, or of lovely women if a girl. An unmarked wrapping is fastened round the infant's head, then the painted one so arranged that one picture is over the forehead, the other over the occiput, and finally other plain bandages to cover the whole. These [124] are left in place for about one year. They flatten the forehead

and back of the head, preventing a bulging appearance which 304
is considered ugly, while the paintings ensure beauty of coun- 789
tenance. Cranial deformation has no supernatural sanction, 856
though it is believed to have been carried out for generations. [532]
[826]

To Cause Leanness

Place pieces of caribou skin on an infant's wrists and ankles 789
and leave them in position for several months. He will grow 856
up lean and wiry, like the animal. [825]

To Cause Left-handedness

Shake the left hand of an infant while lying in the cradle and he will be left-handed throughout life. To do this is considered a malevolent action.

To Cause the Hair to Grow (two means)

(1) Rub the infant's scalp with the eye of a *Hakwilk* (red [825]
cod?), freshly removed from the fish's head.

(2) Boil stems of the swamp gooseberry in water and rub [824]
the mixture over the infant's scalp.

Wise mothers always apply one or other of these remedies to their children.

To Cause Ability in Singing (two means)

(1) When an infant is a few months old, the parents fre- 533
quently request a good singer to impart to him ability similar 789
to his own. He takes his beating-stick, spits on it, and rubs 856
it over the child's heart, saying:

"Please be a singer."

This is done only for male children. [858]

(2) Boil together herbs and a bear's bladder and smear the [825]
decoction on the infant's back. He must thenceforth wear
around his neck for several months a small sack containing
four blue grouse gall-bladders (possibly stones from the crop
were meant). This gives the child the singing ability of the
bird, but the significance of the bear bladder is unknown.

856 *To Cause Ability in Carpentry* (two means)

789 (1) When an infant is a few months old, the parents frequently request a good carpenter to impart to him ability
868 similar to his own. He spits on his tools and rubs these over the child's heart, saying:

"Please be a carpenter."

This is done only for male children.

(2) Cut splinters from the tools of an expert carpenter, burn them, and rub the ashes over the child's hands. This is most efficacious when performed by the carpenter himself who says as he rubs:

"Please be a carpenter."

000 *To Cause Ability in Thieving*

Indians from the vicinity of Sitka are said to fasten a live mouse in an infant's clothing or tie one in the cradle. This causes the child to amass riches easily, but when practised by a Sitka man and woman who were slaves of the Bella Coola it was so potent that their son grew up to be an inveterate thief.

825 *To Cause Ability to See Beneath the Water*

856 When the infant is in the cradle, kill a gull, cut out its tongue, and rub this around inside the child's mouth. Strip
789 the feathers and lay them so that the infant sleeps upon them. This gives him the same ability as the bird to see beneath the ocean and tell where fish are to be found. This was done not many years ago to a Bella Bella child whose ability was consequently so great that it frightened his friends.

To Cause Ability in Hunting

The Kitlobe achieve this by making a child sleep upon dog hair. No instance is remembered of this having actually been practised by the Bella Coola, although, being well known, there is no reason why it should not be used.

To Cause Ability in Understanding the Speech of Ravens 825

It is well known that when ravens croak, they are really 856
speaking, but their language is unintelligible except to one who 784
has learnt it by means of a medicine. One of these is the following:

Catch a raven alive and cut a small piece of flesh from its body, beneath the left wing, taking care not to kill the bird. Release it, after having fed the morsel to the child. An infant so treated will grow up able to learn from ravens of the approach of raiding parties, storms, visitors, and all other news which they constantly circulate in their loud calling. It is said that the last person so endowed was the father of a Kimsquit man about forty years of age in 1922. His ability lasted throughout childhood but he lost it through infraction of a taboo.

The following medicines are used between the ages of one and two: 304

To Cause Long Life 789

One year after birth, holes are pierced through the lobes of 856
the ears and the nasal septum. In the beginning of time, 886
Alquntäm told the forefathers of the Bella Coola that if this were not done, the boy or girl would die young.

To Cause Ability in Hunting

When the umbilical cord of a female infant falls, her father 846
places it within the knot-hole of a tree, where it is protected 856
from rain but where it rots and is forgotten. A boy's is pre- 789
served with care. The parents wrap it in soft goat's wool and
place it in the box where the father keeps his most cherished [858]
possessions; this causes the child to be careful, and to grow up with a tendency to treasure his acquisitions rather than to dispose lavishly of them. As the first anniversary of his
son's birth approaches, his father begins to observe ceremonial [785]
chastity, endeavouring to estimate the time so that its culmin-

[illegible] ating point shall be one year after the birth. Early on the morning of this day, he takes the umbilical cord and goes far into the mountains until he finds a place where the grass is matted and the earth packed, showing that a mountain goat has slept there. He digs a hole, inserts the cord in it, and covers it with stones, praying as he does so:

"Please, father! May my son be skilful, may he be successful in hunting mountain goats."

This has the effect of showing the child where these animals are to be found. The father then returns home.

Four days later he goes back to the same spot, digs up the umbilical cord, brings it home and hangs it in the doorway of the house. Should this be omitted, the child would have an intense longing to hunt in the mountains and would leave home at the first opportunity, but would be unable to return. The cord is left suspended for four days, then taken to the forest and deposited under an overhanging rock where no water can penetrate. It dries in course of time but no further attention is paid to it.

[illegible] A child so treated begins to hunt birds and squirrels when he is eight or ten years of age, and later follows mountain goats with obsidian-pointed arrows. This medicine has been handed down in certain families for generations. If a person, not possessing the prerogative, wishes to have it applied to his child, he requests one who is entitled to use it to perform with his son's umbilical cord in the manner just described. He is later paid for his assistance.

A similar, though simpler medicine is for the father to take the fallen umbilical cord to the mountains immediately and bury it beneath stones where a mountain goat has been lying. Four days later he returns to the spot, digs up the cord, and brings it home, thus ensuring that the child will have no fear of the mountains and will be a successful hunter of mountain goats. In such cases it is customary for the mother to preserve her son's cord during his childhood so that he will not become careless.

To Cause Strength

Place pieces of octopus flesh in the infant's bowl and wash him with them. This causes him to grow up with the strength of the animal.

[illegible]

To Cause Understanding of the Speech of Ravens

When a child is able to toddle, but has not learnt to talk, shut him in a box and turn this upside down. Leave him alone for four days and four nights, passing in what food is necessary during darkness.

Knowledge of this medicine was learnt from *Ana*, a female slave born near New Westminster who was owned by the maternal grandfather of the wife of the elderly Kimsquit man from whom this information was obtained. The slave's father had treated her in this way when an infant; while so confined she had not only learnt the language of ravens, but Cowichan, her own speech, as well. *Ana* used to tell the Kimsquit people of her ability, but few believed her, though she asserted that this was a well-known Cowichan method, and her captors had their own means of imparting the same ability to their children, as well as an ancient tradition of the practice she described. One day she informed her masters that the ravens had told her of the near approach of a raiding-party. She admonished the chiefs, but they laughed at the warning and disregarded it. *Ana* received the same intimation for four days, and on the fourth the raiders appeared and she was vindicated.

The inversion of the box is due to the belief that ravens, when bringing news, turn over upon themselves like tumbler pigeons. The Bella Coola do not know whether the box must be so tight as to hold the child upside down.

To Cause Ceremonial Intelligence

When a child is one or two years of age, paint on its back the picture of a black bear's gall-bladder. Leave this in position for four days, then wash it off secretly in a mountain stream. A child so treated will grow up with ability to perform

[illegible]
[illegible]
532

ceremonial dances without making mistakes. The Bella Bella paint a representation of a wolf's bladder for the same purpose.

The basis of this medicine is the belief that it is the gall-bladder which causes wildness and intelligence too, and hence that anyone so treated will be careful not to make mistakes. A bird with a large bladder is thought to be difficult to approach, whereas a deer, which has a small one, or none at all, is often stupidly tame. This medicine is known only to the members of certain families and is used for the children of these alone, since errors on the part of others is a matter of little importance.

MEDICINES OF CHILDHOOD

Some of the instruction given to boys and girls, and the acts which they are enjoined to perform, are virtually religious, and have accordingly been described in earlier chapters. For example, when a lad washes in the river before daybreak, scours himself with a smooth stone and prays to *Alquntam*, he is carrying out what might with justice be called a religious act. If, however, he believes that mere washing is enough to compel some desire or end, it is magical. Different Bella Coola have different sentiments concerning the exact means by which this method causes the desired effect. To some it is unquestionably a true prayer, but in other families it is customary for a father to take his son, when he has reached about eight years of age, and wash him four times, to the accompaniment of the usual prayer. It is believed that this causes the lad to grow up powerful and active, constantly striving for success. This type of washing may be called magical.

In the following there is no element of uncertainty, they belong unquestionably to the category described in the preceding section.

To Cause Agility

The following medicine is frequently employed by fathers when their sons are first able to walk.

Kill a squirrel, clean it, wash the entrails carefully and leave them hanging in the sun to dry for four days, then tie them round the child's stomach for four days more. It is important that the infant should not break the string. On the fourth day, remove them and hang them in the doorway of the house. On this same day, another squirrel must be killed, treated as before, and its viscera allowed to dry for four days. The child wears them in the same way for four days, when they are hung in the doorway. A third squirrel, and finally a fourth, is killed and made use of in precisely the same manner. When the final set of entrails has been hung up, the four are suspended for four days, till the twenty-eighth after the killing of the first animal, when the father takes them to the [illegible] and deposits them beneath some projecting rock where no water can penetrate and where they will dry and keep indefinitely.

825
789
856

To cause the child to grow up endowed, like the squirrel, with agility so that he can scale even precipitous mountains. This medicine is frequently used in conjunction with one for hunting ability.

To Give Easy Delivery

[145]

Rub the foetus of a porcupine against the back of a girl's neck and allow it to drop to the ground. Pick it up, replace it, and let it fall again. This is repeated four times while the parent prays:

"[illegible], may she be like you and have no trouble in giving birth."

The medicine can be used at any time before puberty.

To Give Bravery (four means)

(1) When a grizzly bear has been shot, a lad who wishes to make himself brave approaches it and thrusts his arm down the dying animal's throat. This kills it by choking. Then he rubs the hand over his heart and the back of his neck, the same

[776]

825
771
856
[774]

of the spirit, which imparts to himself the courage and strength of the animal he has just slain.

(x) When a grizzly bear has been killed and skinned, the bloody pelt is wrapped around a lad whose parents wish him to be brave. He is lashed in securely and the bundle, attached to a long rope, is thrown into the rapids. After a few minutes, it is drawn ashore, but immediately thrown in again. This is repeated four times. This medicine causes the child to have the courage of a grizzly bear. It is said that the first youth to whom this was applied rescued his mother from slavery among the Tsimshian.

This treatment is usually applied to boys of from three to five years of age.

(y) When a grizzly bear has been killed and skinned, two lads, whose parents wish them to be brave, are called. They are told to crouch on their hands and knees and while in this position the pelt is thrown over their backs. They crawl to and fro for a few minutes while dogs are encouraged to bark and growl at the "animal." The skin is then removed and the two sent to wash in the river. They are called back and the whole rite repeated a second time, followed by a third and a fourth application, with washing in every case. This gives them the bravery of grizzly bears.

This medicine can be used at any time before the holding of sexual intercourse.

(z) When an octopus has been killed, a lad is placed within the freshly removed skin. Those present say:

"[illegible], may he be like you, afraid of nothing."

The skin is removed and the lad sent to wash in the river. The rite is repeated four times which gives him the bravery of an octopus. Like the last, this medicine is not potent for one who has held sexual intercourse.

To Cause Ability in River Work

Fasten a boy in the freshly removed skin of a beaver and throw the bundle into the river. Lift it out when it has gone beneath the surface, and throw it in a second time. Repeat this four times. If the wrapping has been carefully fastened, little water leaks in and the child suffers no discomfort. This causes him to grow up confident and brave with respect to canoeing and every kind of activity on the river. Like the last medicine, this is not potent for one who has held sexual intercourse. It cannot be applied to a girl since beaver are unfavourable to women who must observe many taboos concerning them.

To Cause Modesty and Respect for One's Elders

When a boy is about six or eight years of age, his father beats him lightly, four times, with a [illegible]. This is done in the early morning, then he takes his son to wash immediately. Four days later the beating and washing are repeated. From this time on, a parent should whip his son four times every fourth morning until he is old enough to marry. The force of the chastisements increases as the lad grows older, so that when he is about fourteen years of age, he is beaten with the full force of his parent's arm. It is a point of honour for a lad to endure his whippings without whimpering; one who shows the pain he is suffering is laughed at by his fellows and not allowed to wash with them. This medicine makes a child strong, manly, respectful to his elders, and, generally, the type of individual to whom supernatural beings are likely to show favour.

This practice has long been discontinued and it was impossible to learn whether or not it had ever been carried out with full vigour. Several of the older men stated that in their childhood they had been beaten periodically by their fathers, but none had had this last over a period of years. It was claimed that such had been the case in earlier times, but it seems almost certain that this type of chastisement could never have been carried out regularly. During the winter, for example, when [illegible] dances were taking place, the whole community used to sleep late and it is improbable that a father rose every fourth morning to whip his son. It is clear, however, that such was regarded as proper by anyone practising this medicine, even though few did so regularly.

MEDICINES APPLIED TO YOUNG DOGS

To Cause Ability in Hunting

When a bear has been killed and the first incision made for skinning it, take a puppy, force its head inside the opening, and rub it to and fro. Throw the animal into the river and when it has swum ashore, repeat the rite. If this act is repeated four times, the dog will grow up to be a good hunter.

To Cause Ability in Hunting Beaver

Wrap the puppy in the freshly removed skin of a beaver and throw it into the river to the accompaniment of hand-clapping from as many as happen to be present. After submersion for a few moments, remove the bundle and throw it in again. Repeat this twice more. This makes the dog grow up unafraid of water and, accordingly, useful in hunting beaver.

To Cause Disregard of Musket Shot

Lay some black powder at the nose of a sleeping puppy and ignite it. The dog will grow up without fear of musket shots.

To Cause Keen Scent

Slit any kind of salmon so that the liver is exposed and hold the puppy with its nose immediately over this. Make an incision in the lip so that the blood flows freely on to the organs of the salmon. Hold the animal until flies have gathered from all directions to feast upon the fish and fresh blood.

The dog will grow up with the ability to locate game in any direction, just as flies gather wherever there is blood. He will also have that ability to travel without requiring a path. One old man stated that this medicine was the property of an ancestral family, and should be used when a puppy is one month old.

To Cause Ability in Hunting Mountain Goats

Hang the freshly removed head of a fisher, wolf, or wolverine in smoke for four days. Break a hole in the top of the skull and hold the puppy's head over this, then slit its nose so that the blood drips down into the interior of the cranium. Release the dog, take the head to the mountains and bury it in the ground beneath a spot where mountain goats have been sleeping. Dig it up four days later and conceal it under a sheltering rock where it is protected from the rain.

This medicine causes the dog to grow up with knowledge of the habits of mountain goats as well as with the bravery of whichever animal was used. This custom can be practised only by members of the ancestral families to which it belongs.

To Cause Ability in Hunting Otter or Seal

Obtain the head of whichever is desired, and proceed as described for mountain goats. Instead of burying, place the skull under shelter near a creek much frequented by land otters, or near the ocean where seals are plentiful. It need not be taken up after four days.

To Cause General Ability

This medicine can be applied only by a successful hunter, who expects compensation for his assistance. It is employed when a puppy is about one month old.

Early in the morning the hunter seats himself on a box within the house of the dog's master, his legs stretched out before him. He seizes the puppy firmly and passes it, sunwise, around and under his legs four times, frequently spitting on its nose and kneading it with his hands to make that organ sensitive. This causes the animal to grow up with good tracking ability, while the passing motion is believed to be [illegible]. Then the hunter seizes the dog by the hind legs and swings it four times, sunwise, over and through the smoke of the fire. This prevents it from being dizzy and afraid of precipitous mountains, but if it yelps as it travels through the air, it will be a poor dog. Finally, the hunter carries it to the river and throws it in. He takes an [illegible] ashore and throws it back once more. This is repeated four times and causes the animal to have no fear of man.

In former times great attention was paid to the training of young dogs.

MEDICINES RELATING TO LOVE, MARRIAGE, AND CHILDBIRTH

To Cause Love

This medicine is applied by women to men, and by men to women.

Obtain a hair of a person whose love is sought, place with it one of the seeker's and tie the two in a strip of birch-bark together with a shred of octopus skin. This causes intense desire between the two. This medicine is usually personally applied by [illegible].

A similar usage is to wear the two hairs over the stomach, held by a belt. Men, especially, do this to cause love on the part of girls who they admire. An old Bella Coola mentioned that he had on had occasion to investigate the box of a Kimsquit man in which he found the tip of a land otter's tail, split, and containing two small tufts of hair, one the owner's, the other, a wife's. This ensured lasting devotion between the two.

To Cause Love for Oneself

A few years ago certain *Kálkal* of Kimsquit used the following medicine to attract two sisters:

He made two forms, one representing a male, and the other a female. To each he tied birch-bark, octopus-skin, a few of his own hairs and some obtained from the girls. Each figure was provided with sexual organs, and he placed them in position for sexual intercourse. This caused the two girls to desire *Kálkal* so madly that they almost became demented in their infatuation. Their mother, *[illegible]*, suspected that *Kálkal* had been using something of the kind and searched his box during his absence. As soon as she had found the figures, she called in all the people, showed them her discovery, and suggested throwing them into the fire. Some objected, pointing out that if *Kilitl* had been using them, their destruction would cause his death. It was decided to test him, so no one told the lover that he had been found out, and he suspected nothing on his return. When he went into another house, *Kwa·tsa* placed the figures near the fire; immediately, *Kilitl* tried to lie down at the edge of the one near him, and was restrained only by some of the bystanders. This proved his guilt conclusively. *Kwa·tsa* washed the figures to destroy their power, which caused *Kilitl* to lose his desire to enter a fire, and at the same time destroyed the love of the two girls for him. 832

This medicine can be made only by a skilful carpenter; its real potency lies in the ingredients though the figures cause it to work more speedily.

To Strengthen Virility

This medicine is used by old men. 833

Catch a porcupine alive and cut out a quill from near its tail so that the blood flows freely. Prick the penis with the quill until the human blood mingles with the animal's. Potency follows at once. 836 825

To Cause Conception

A medicine was formerly known to cause a first conception, but it has been forgotten. A mother, however, who has just lost an infant, can ensure the birth of another by bringing a stone from the cemetery four days after her bereavement. If she leaves this beneath her bed for four nights, and then throws it away carelessly, anywhere, she will soon be pregnant. 842 789

To Prevent Conception

A medicine with this effect was formerly known but has been forgotten.

842 *To Cause Birth of a Child of the Desired Sex*

789 If a boy is desired: The pregnant woman must have prepared for her a miniature bow and arrows on which she sleeps for four nights and then throws into the fire.

If a girl is desired: The pregnant woman must have prepared for her miniature tools used for beating cedar-bark on which she sleeps for four nights and then throws into the fire.

843 *To Cause Easy Delivery (two recipes)*

789 (a) The pregnant woman must boil stalks of stonecrop in water and drink freely of the decoction.

(b) A variant of the medicine already described can be applied during pregnancy. Strike the back of the woman with one or more porcupine embryos. The doctor must remain in concealment and the woman to be benefited must be unaware of what is about to be done.

853 *To Cause Increased Flow of Milk*

757 Heat pods of *Sedum Spathulifolium* (Hook) and apply them as a poultice to the breasts of the nursing mother.

MISCELLANEOUS MEDICINES USED BY ADULTS

461 *To Cause Energy*

789 Take the paw of a freshly killed beaver in one hand and pat it with the other, saying:

825 "Please, may I be like you."

This ensures that the man or woman will always work hard, like a beaver.

789 *To Cause Long Life*

Pick up a toad, spit on it four times, saying:

825 "May I be strong like you," and put it down carefully.

886 The basis of this medicine is the belief that toads are capable of resisting greater pressure than other animals. For example, if one is caught in an olachen net, it survives the crushing weight of fish and water and is alive when the net is emptied, though all other living animals so ensnared are killed.

[illegible] E-9 (1922-1924) [illegible]
[illegible] Bella-coola [illegible]

It is said that one man was accidentally sucked when spitting on a toad, and swallowed the creature. It lived within his stomach for fifty years, causing no discomfort though he himself could feel it moving, and its singing could be heard at intervals. This brought him no supernatural power, although he was enabled by it to live to a great age. When at last he died, the toad came hopping out of his throat and was carried respectfully to the river by his friends who covered the creature with eagle down and dyed and undyed cedar-bark.

Some of the rites already described with regard to animals and fish are similar in nature to this medicine.

To Cause Obesity

A medicine was formerly used by chiefs to make them fat and important-looking, but details of it have been forgotten.

To Cause Ability in Singing

Catch an amusni-i (varied thrush?) alive and put it four times against the throat of the woman to whom it is desired to impart the art, saying:

"May she be a singer like you."

Release the bird and the woman will become a good singer.

This bird is considered by the Bella Coola to be the finest songster among British Columbia birds, and they say that many animals and fish, including even the halibut, gather to hear its singing.

To Cause Ability in Hunting

There is a poisonous plant which, when eaten, almost kills the eater. If he recovers, he is henceforth endowed with great ability as a hunter. The species could not be ascertained.

To Cause Change in Weather

If a cold wind is desired: Place the penis of a mountain goat or beaver at a fire.

If rain is desired: Wash the penis of a large buck and throw it into the water at a river, saying:

781 "Woman, may it be as it was when you held intercourse."
821 The basis of these medicines is that excessive gusts and
825 breezes occur in November when it is cold, and also in October when it is rainy.

An old Kimsquit man mentioned that one winter he had been driven ashore by continuous cold winds and was on the verge of starving. He drew a bath and by using the medicine just described was able to bring rain with consequent lessening of wind so that he could continue his journey.

MISCELLANEOUS MEDICINES

754 *To Destroy the Benefits of Another's Ceremonial Chastity*
825 Place pieces of flesh from any recently deceased animal within a coffin from which the skeleton of an enemy has been removed, uttering at the same time the name of the person to be injured. This destroys the "cleanness" acquired by the observance of ceremonial chastity.[1]

To Cause Insanity in a Woman

Catch a squirrel alive and tie one of the woman's hairs around its stomach, then release the animal. As it runs violently through the forest, sometimes head upwards, sometimes head downwards, so will the brain of the person whose hair it is carrying begin to churn violently till madness ensues.

To Cause Ferocity in Grizzly Bears

Throw the body of a recently killed mallard against a man's back. The next grizzly bear he encounters will be ferocious, and may kill him. Knowledge of this medicine was learnt by noticing that a number of men who had been struck in play with mallards, were killed by grizzly bears. The potency of the act has since been recognized.

754 *To Cause Disease in a [illegible]*
781 A number of years ago, when three Bella Coola were killed

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[1] This medicine was learnt from a rather unsatisfactory informant and was not confirmed by others.

in a skirmish by the Carriers, one of their women relieved a body by pulling out the eyes. The corpses were found and a Bella Coola with secret knowledge dropped in the eye sockets some potent medicine. As the corpses rotted, the murderers began to suffer pains, and the woman who had pulled out the eyes lost her sight. As a blind, old woman, she had been seen by several men with whom the scene was discussed. 754 [727]

To Cause the Death of a Murderer (three means)

(b) Two women were murdered at Kimsquit in 1915. Before they were buried, an elderly Bella Coola put a secret medicine on the back of the neck of each so that the murderer would die from a disease located there. Within eight months, a Kitamaat man succumbed to a deep sore at the back of the neck, and it was assumed that he must have visited Kimsquit women and perpetrated the double murder. 754 682 [766]

Medicines like this and the preceding are widely known, but it is sorcerers who specialize in using them.

(c) When a man dies suddenly and murder is suspected, although the perpetrator is unknown, place the corpse within an old, hollow spruce log. As it rots, vermin infest the flesh and at the same time the body of the murderer becomes lacerated and full of sores. This method was employed during the lifetime of an informant and caused the death of the suspected murderer, whose guilt was thereby accepted as proved. [766] [685]

(d) Bury the victim's body with a toad in its mouth and the murderer will soon die. [766]

To Kill

Lift a stone from the ground and point it at one or more individuals. This causes their death in the same form. 754

This information was obtained from one informant only; others were unwilling, and confirmation from other sources was not forthcoming.

PREVENTIVE AND CURATIVE MEDICINES

MEDICINES OF INFANCY AND CHILDHOOD

789 *To Counteract Dangers Incurred During Pregnancy* (two means)

774 843 825 (1) As already described (I, p. 96), there is always danger of a person losing his spirit through a sudden start, causing involuntary contraction of the muscles, but pregnant women are especially liable to peril of this kind. Moreover, the unexpected appearance of a toad, rat, or mouse, though insufficient to harm an expectant mother, may suffice to startle the unborn child, or even to destroy his spirit. A woman carefully remembers all experiences of this kind and treats the injury while her infant is crying immediately after birth. If a toad has caused it, she catches one, decorates it with dyed cedar-bark, and places it on the child's stomach, then guides it so that it jumps up the chest to the neck. This is repeated four times. She then sets it down, unharmed on the ground, saying:

"You are the cause of the trouble, please go."

[846] The same rite is carried out for all small mammals, reptiles, and even with birds which have startled a mother by their peculiar behaviour. In some families it is customary to postpone the application of this medicine until four days after birth. There is considerable difference of opinion concerning the specific injury; some allege that the spirit of the creature enters the body and, if not counteracted, causes the child to be born sick and feeble.

843 825 784 [846 761 774] (2) During his wife's pregnancy, a husband must preserve a small portion of the skin of every animal killed. Four days after birth, as the infant lies in its cradle, a small fire is built beneath and the pieces thrown thereon so that the child is steeped in the smoke. If this is neglected, the boy or girl will die during infancy, though the means by which the slain animals accomplish this is not fully understood. Possibly, as in the last instance, their spirits have entered the body. Some hunters preserve an eye from every carcass instead of a piece

of fur. Even at the present time, the death of a new-born child is usually attributed to omission of this precaution. 843 855

A Kimsquit man mentioned that he had once shot a marten during his wife's pregnancy, and had failed to preserve a piece of the skin. The bullet had passed through the head, making a hole in the cheek-bone beneath the eye. He thought no more of the incident until after the birth of a daughter with a blemish on her cheek in the same place as the wound on the marten's. The spot grew bigger, and the flesh began to mortify until the infant died a few weeks later. Her face resembled that of the animal and he is convinced that his loss was caused, in some way, by the marten. 774 [761]

To Cure Indigestion

Kill a raven, cut out a morsel of flesh from beneath its left wing, and then remove the heart. Place both in the infant's mouth and leave them there until wet with saliva. Replace them in the bird's body and tie a strip of dyed cedar-bark around its neck. Carry the carcass to some lonely spot in the mountains and hide it beneath a jutting rock where no water can penetrate. This cures the child. If, however, anyone should find the raven's body before the flesh has decayed, the patient would die. 755 [761]

This remedy, widely employed for small children, was used with success by an informant for his young daughter. It is not sufficiently potent for adults.

To Cure Crying

The Bella Coola consider that crying is not only unpleasant, but actively displeasing to the supernatural beings who permit it at death alone. Consequently, the persistent wailing of a child is likely to cause the death of a relative in order that the tears shed may have justification. Many stories illustrate this theme; in fact, to cry for no real reason is practically taboo. A mother quiets a fretting child by saying: 857 865 761 [784] [861]

"Do you want your father and me to die?"

827
865 If the father dies, she beats her son or daughter, adding: "Cry now. See what you did."

[761] Henceforth the child restrains himself, but usually drastic steps are taken to reform an infant before his weeping causes any such misfortune. The parents of a petulant child request aid from a man of even temperament to cure him. The person undertaking the task prepares a large basket, watches until he notices the youngster crying and displaying bad temper, then seizes the offender, thrusts him into the basket and hangs it in the doorway, free to move with every stir of the child shut within.

"Cry as much as you like now," he says. "If you become hoarse like a heron you will turn into one of those birds."

This threat is based on an ancient story describing how a child to whom this was done changed into a heron and flapped away in bird form. Sometimes the man says that the same will happen to the child, or simply that he will be able to fly like a heron. All day he is left suspended, no one heeding his sobbing and howling, but in the evening he is taken down, petted, and told not to be naughty again. This medicine always cures a petulant child who can thenceforth be held to ridicule by being reminded that he is "A Basket Boy." The same remedy is often employed for a quarrelsome brother and sister who are shut up together.

865 *To Cure Disobedience and Rudeness*

861 If a child is persistently rude and disobedient to his parents, they request the assistance of a man of even temperament to cure him. The person selected must be one who is never angry, and who attends to his own business in a placid, quiet manner. The mother and father discuss who is best fitted by character to help their erring child and then ask his aid, promising a suitable recompense. If the man accepts the task, he waits till he notices the child crying peevishly. Running to him, he holds the youngster firmly and, in spite of his strug-

glen, bites him between the eyes or at the back of the neck so 865
that a little blood flows. 861

"If you don't keep quiet," he says to the screaming child, "I shall bite you all over your head."

This medicine acts in two ways: (1) The offender is so frightened that he is likely to reform; (2) Contact with a man of good disposition imparts the same to him. A tuft of mountain goat wool is inserted into the wound to make it heal properly.

To Cure Disobedience and Laziness 461

Parents whose child exhibits these bad qualities also ask 865
help of a man of good character. If he accepts the task, he
provides himself with a bone needle and waits until he hears 861
the child refuse to perform some simple task. Then, with a rush, he throws the offender on his stomach and applies the needle until the blood flows freely. He then releases the frightened child who usually slinks away to bed for the rest of the day. When the bleeding has ceased, the quiet person cuts chips from the canoe of an energetic man and rubs them on the wound, saying:

"Please, may you be like the canoe, always active and doing whatever is expected of you."

An old Kimsquit man recalled vividly the application of this medicine to him when he refused to fetch water for his mother. He was about eleven years of age at the time and asserted that it had greatly improved his behaviour.

MEDICINES FOR ORDINARY DISEASES

For Sprains and Bruises 752

Pound stalks of false hellebore, mix with hemlock gum, and bind on the injured spot as a poultice.

For Swollen Neck

Cut off small pieces of a thoroughly smoked bear's heart, 757
pound in water, and drink the mixture.

757 *For Head-ache*

Tie around the forehead a piece of dyed cedar-bark, undyed cedar-bark, or other similar material. No herbal remedy is known.

For Eye Trouble

Moisten the finger with saliva and rub the eyes with it.

For Baldness (two means)

(1) Boil cottonwood buds in water, causing the gum to exude. Skim this from the surface, mix with fresh olachen grease or oil obtained from sockeye salmon, and rub on the scalp.

(2) Rub on the scalp oil from olachen, dog-fish, or any kind of salmon. The best is grease from the liver (?) of a dog-fish, obtained by hanging the organ before a fire and collecting the drops which exude.

For Skin Irritation

Rub dog-fish liver oil on the rash or itching part.

755 *For Excessive Dreaming and Nightmares* (two means)

828 (1) Burn dried salmon beneath the bed of the person afflicted.

(2) Lie in a canoe which has been chiselled out to the right thickness but has not been widened and hardened by smoke. A mat is laid across for this purpose and the smoke directed beneath, thoroughly fumigating anyone lying within. An informant was so treated as a young man when he was greatly troubled by nightmares in which he used to see a huge head which so terrified him that he would leave his bed to rush around the house shrieking and tearing his hair. This medicine cured his trouble.

757 *For Canker*

Pound up a snail and rub on the sore spot within the mouth.

For Cold 757

Snuff dried urine such as is found around the rims of unemptied chamber pots. *Kāmai·ts* taught the ancestors of the Bella Coola that this was good for colds. [773]

For Sore Throat

Boil cottonwood buds in dog-fish oil and drink about a teaspoonful of the decoction at intervals until cured. Dog-fish oil, being a necessary ingredient in many medicines, is always kept on hand for emergencies.

For Coughing

Boil roots of false hellebore in water and drink the decoction freely. It is so poisonous that the patient usually falls to the ground, spitting blood. Coughing is one of the many ailments cured by this plant.

755 Another remedy is used for a person whose cough causes him to spit frequently. A friend collects some of the fresh expectoration, mixes it with salmon roe, and places it where ravens are accustomed to feed. This is done four times and the patient is cured if the birds devour the mixture.

For Whooping-Cough

757 Boil cottonwood buds in water with the fat of any animal and drink frequently.

For Sores and Boils

Warm dried urine and rub on the part affected. Like the remedy for colds, it was *Kāmai·ts* who taught this to the ancestors of the Bella Coola. Gum or tobacco is sometimes added to the urine, and applied like a poultice. [773]

For Boils (two means)

(1) Heat human excrement thoroughly and apply to the boil, tying it in position with cloth. At intervals, add more, without removing the bottom layer and leave in position for

757 about one week. This causes the skin to turn white and draws out the matter.

752 [177] (2) The usual remedy for boils and similar sores is cutting. There are no professional surgeons so that a patient merely requests a friend in whom he has confidence to perform the operation which is now carried out with a metal knife instead of an obsidian blade. A man frequently performs on himself and it is not uncommon to see a Bella Coola sitting nonchalantly with the blood streaming down his leg into a receptacle filled with water. Even when a boil is on the buttocks, it may be cut by sitting down on a knife, but in this case a friend is always present to state when the position is correct.

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For Ulcers and Abscesses

A few individuals, at present two at Bella Coola and one at Kimsquit, have the necessary skill to locate and operate on ulcers of the stomach. They have no inherited prerogative, their ability is due solely to practice and good sense. If a person suffers from internal pains and believes them to be caused by an ulcer, he requests one of these men to help him. The practitioner kneads and handles the patient to locate the growth, and suggests operating if he thinks it necessary. He measures off on the blade of a knife the depth required for the incision and asks consent to make such a cut. If the sufferer considers it too deep, he may indicate a shorter distance on the knife, or he may desire a still deeper one. As soon as patient and surgeon have agreed upon the depth of the wound, the latter inserts the knife to the proper distance, twists it around, and draws it out. If he has diagnosed correctly, pus comes pouring out; the wound is drained by the insertion of an eagle quill, and in many cases the patient recovers. Several instances are remembered of too deep cutting, resulting in penetration of the intestines and death. A surgeon is always suitably rewarded for his work.

It is believed that such operations were performed before the introduction of metal knives. Whether or not this be true,

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[757]

it is certain that one of this type took place about 1870. No information could be obtained about other surgical practices. The Bella Coola are unacquainted with either amputating or cupping, and it is most unlikely that they performed more than cutting and the setting of broken limbs. Though incisions are primarily for boils and abscesses, one may be made in case of any obstinate pain, in the belief that some foreign matter has entered the body and must be extracted.

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For Stomach-Ache (two means)

(1) Peel the outer surface of red elderberry roots and chew a section until all the juice has been squeezed forth and swallowed; then spit out the tasteless bark and take a second piece. This must be continued for some time. It is dangerous to allow the liquid to remain within the stomach, so warm water must be taken as an emetic.

(2) Take five roots of the plant *ma'ewal i*, each about one-tenth of an inch in diameter and one inch in length, grind them to powder and pour on water. Warm the mixture to body heat and drink in large quantities. This acts as an emetic and the patient feels hungry after vomiting. If cooked for a longer time, the roots provide a valuable food. [262]

This medicine is not sufficiently potent for serious attacks.

For Stomach-Ache, and also for Other Internal Pains (two means)

(1) Strip the bark from a *kak'tulp* (birch?) branch a few inches in diameter and about three feet in length, and boil for an hour in a small amount of water. Care must be taken not to boil the decoction too long or it will become poisonous. Drink about four cupfuls of the mixture. It causes the stomach to heave violently, followed by vomiting. Then drink warm water, which also acts as an emetic. Take a further potion of the medicine, then more water, and continue with alternate doses until the vomit is clear. This medicine is so powerful that a patient usually recovers by the following day.

757 (c) Place on the surface of the skin nearest the pain hemlock gum and a human bone taken from that part of the skeleton adjacent to the seat of the discomfort.

[924] This medicine is the property of several ancestral families and can be used only by members of them.

For Stomach Trouble and Rheumatism

Scrape in the earth a hole about six inches deep and six feet in length. In the bottom deposit a large number of hot stones and cover them with a thin layer of river sand mixed with fine gravel. On these place as many herbal medicines as possible; such as nettles, devil's club bark, western dock, cottonwood leaves, green moss-like growths from water-covered stones, bark from spruce saplings, and the debris from cones eaten by squirrels. The actual ingredients vary according to season; in winter, for example, only one or two may be available. Mats are thrown over the plants for the patient to lie upon, covered by additional ones. A helper is always present to sprinkle him with water when the heat becomes too great and to rub away the sweat which pours off with a sponge of undyed cedar-bark. Instances are remembered of patients going to sleep in this type of sweat-house and being severely burnt.

For a person who is very ill, the hole is dug within the house, near the central fire, otherwise it is located at any convenient spot in the woods. This remedy is known to, and can be used by, everyone.

For Stomach Trouble and Water in the Blood

Dig a hole about three feet deep and with the same diameter. Throw hot stones in the bottom and place a rack of crossed and tied sticks across the excavation below the level of the ground. On this place medicinal herbs as described in the last remedy. The patient squats over the hole, enclosed in a tent-like shelter of mats or cedar-bark. Water is thrown on the stones and the enclosure prevents the resultant steam from escaping.

This type of sweat-house, which can be used by anyone, is usually built in the forest. The Bella Coola have great confidence in the use of one as a means of curing all types of internal ailments, especially from the bad effects of water which is believed to have entered the blood. In former years many patients were blinded by the steam affecting their eyes, so that a recent improvement has been the construction of a door-like opening through which the head projects. Many stories are told of people being cured in this way after a white doctor had abandoned hope. 757

No Bella Coola had heard of a sweat-house large enough to contain more than a single individual, and a question whether they were ever used as meeting-places was regarded as highly humorous and absurd. [illegible]

For Ailments of the Heart

The patient must eat some of his own excrement mixed with certain herbs, of which it was impossible to learn the species. This remedy can be used only by the members of certain ancestral families. [424]

For the Blood

The following medicine is the property of certain families; consequently, anyone else who wishes to use it must obtain the services of an owner to apply it, and must recompense him for so doing. [424]

The man who is to apply the remedy locates a pond where water-lilies are growing and then searches for four spruce saplings growing in line, approximately east to west. He cuts four branches from the east side of each tree and lays them beside the pond with a small space between each bunch. Then he pulls up some lily roots, lays them in the three gaps between the boughs, and wraps the whole into a bundle with a cord consisting of alternate strands of dyed and undyed cedar-bark which he winds around, clock-wise. On returning home, the practitioner must not carry his burden through the door but

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throw it in through the smoke-vent. He cuts the roots into thin slices which are boiled in water for four days. The patient drinks several cupfuls of the decoction which never fail to benefit him.

The basis of this medicine is the belief, already described, that when a *sniatl* swims through a pond it frequently sheds some of its scales which become water-lilies. They are, therefore, potent in themselves and are of greatest benefit to one who has practised ceremonial chastity. The patient must observe several taboos for forty days after treatment: He must hold no sexual intercourse; must eat neither salmon nor meat that has not been smoked; must eat nothing cooked either by a menstruating woman or by one who has lost her husband within a year; and must not approach a girl during the year following puberty. The breaking of one of these taboos causes his death, and the man who has administered the medicine watches the conduct of his patient with great care. [776]

755 *For Debility* (two means)

(1) Drink strong, stale urine, mixed with red rock-paint ground fine.

Knowledge of this medicine has been handed down for [424] generations in certain familes. It is said to be most unpleasant to take.

(2) The following medicine, said to be the most potent known to the Bella Coola, is used for a person who has long been feeble, especially if he has been spitting blood. It is the [424] property of several ancestral families, and must be administered by an elderly male member of one of them.

The owner of the remedy obtains a dry, clean skull, places within it a little water which he brings to a boil with hot pebbles and adds a small quantity of mountain goat marrow. The patient is given a dry stick, about three feet in length, from which the pith has been extracted to make a tube. With this he sucks four times, swallowing a little of the decoction, while the practitioner says to the skull:

"Please remedy the invalid." 755

This is virtually a prayer, addressed to the deceased owner of the skull, and accordingly verges on appeal to the dead. None the less, there is no concept of active supplication to any individual ghost, but rather of acquiring aid by the use of a supernatural object.

For one year after this treatment, sexual intercourse is forbidden to both practitioner and patient. The latter, though not the former, dies if either fails to observe this taboo. The use of an old man to apply the medicine is to lessen danger from this source. The owner of this remedy is always liberally rewarded and some old men carefully preserve a skull under a rock-ledge in order to be ready if called upon. [756] [761]

For Smallpox

Pick up a toad, and tear off its head with the teeth, swallowing some of the blood. 757

This is an ancient remedy for some other ailment which was tried as a last resort during the smallpox epidemic. One man who succeeded in practising it on four successive days was cured of the dread disease.

For Consumption

Boil leaves and stems of a certain fleshy plant (not identified) in water and drink the decoction. The potency of the medicine increases accordingly to the number of plants used.

This medicine was a Nootka Indian's hereditary cure for a cough which was found to be effective for consumption as well. The malady was so prevalent on the coast in the last century that it seemed as if the inhabitants were doomed; this remedy was allegedly discovered at that time and knowledge of it spread rapidly from tribe to tribe, saving the lives of hundreds. The Bella Coola recognize that this was a private medicine, but have ceased to regard it as such and have no hesitation in applying it whenever required. [177] [164]

755 *For Insanity*

177 The Bella Coola have no medicine for this disease, although they are familiar with one used by the Kwakiutl, which was applied not long ago to a Rivers Inlet youth by two old women, one from Nuwitti and the other from *Djuldemes*. They exhumed a recently buried corpse, took a small piece of skin from the left side of the base of the neck, left this for twenty-four hours in a small stream, and then allowed it to steep for another twenty-four hours in a cup filled with water. This liquid was drunk by the patient who immediately recovered his sanity. He was then given water in which had been boiled tendrils from the yellow cedar; this strengthened him and prevented a relapse. [785] The patient, now cured, observed continence for a year; [761] failure to obey this injunction would have caused his death.

The Bella Coola assume that this remedy is the property of Kwakiutl ancestral families who alone are entitled to use it. The practitioners are always suitably recompensed and do not undertake the treatment except at the request of one of the patient's relatives. Kwakiutl experts have been brought to Bella Coola several times within recent years to cure cases of insanity, but great secrecy is maintained concerning the methods employed. They are considered to be effective, in proof of which the attention of the writer was directed to two sane men who were said to have been raving lunatics before undergoing a Kwakiutl treatment. It is probable that the individuals had been subject to periodic fits of insanity and that a temporary improvement was regarded as a definite cure.

757 *For Venereal Disease* (four means)

(1) Boil scrapings of false hellebore roots in water for a long time and drink the decoction. If it is too strong, add more water.

(2) Pound *sku'tcale*, a kind of fungus, in water and drink the brew.

(3) Pound bark and wood of the black hawthorn in water and drink the brew. 757

(4) The following medicine must be prepared by the patient himself. It is not generally known, but the woman from whom the information was obtained claimed that it had been used with success by her brother.

Obtain a human bone, or a piece of a coffin, and burn it secretly in the forest at some distance from the village. Mix the ashes with dog-fish oil. After preparing the medicine the patient must remain alone in the woods for four days. He can then return home and rub the mixture on his genital organs to reduce the swelling. The sufferer must remain continent for one year or the disease will return with increased malignancy.

It was impossible to learn which types of venereal disease are believed to be curable by these medicines. Nor could definite information be obtained concerning the length of time that the Bella Coola have suffered from these maladies. Most of the old people affirmed that they were unknown before the coming of the white man, although one elderly woman was emphatic in stating that they had experienced them for many generations. 164

For Difficult Delivery (three means) 757

(1) The usual remedy, which has been described already, is to apply hot ashes to the woman's feet as soon as the pangs of delivery are felt. 845

(2) If delivery has been delayed beyond the usual time, it can be accelerated by giving the woman a morsel of the testicle of a beaver mixed with water. This causes the infant to be born at once.

(3) In case of extremely protracted delivery, a husband can help his wife by urinating upon her head.

For Breast Trouble 757

The cure for a pain in a woman's breast is to make a deep incision so that the blood flows freely.

752 *For Fractures:*

An effort is made to straighten the limb and to place the ends of the broken bone together in their proper position. If there is considerable swelling, an incision is made to let blood escape. Hemlock gum is applied freely to the whole region to soften the wound and hold the splints in position. This penetrates the cut, if one has been made, and is believed to facilitate the knitting process. Any small sticks are used for splints.

REMEDIES FOR AILMENTS CAUSED BY SUPERNATURAL OR HUMAN BEINGS

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753 Persons suffering from diseases or accidents of the types described in the previous section are not the only ones whom the Bella Coola consider to be sick. A girl at puberty, a mother who has just given birth, a man or woman whose consort has just died, has been placed in a peculiar relation to the supernatural and is in a condition identical to that of one suffering from a disease. The ritual acts prescribed at these crises of life are medicines, just as truly as an herbal potion or a curative treatment. In fact, anyone who has been in close touch with the supernatural is in a critical condition and must act circumspectly, the reason for the taboos observed by shamans.

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[75] Hunters particularly, and others who are likely to come in contact with supernatural beings, employ a number of medicines to protect themselves or to alleviate the dangers to which they have been exposed. As already described, the most potent of these are articles which have been rendered essentially human by contact with the body. For example, an evil supernatural being such as the War-Party of the Tides can be kept at a distance by casting soiled clothing upon a fire. Even more powerful are stained cedar-bark sanitary napkins. It is remembered that when a Bella Bella lad was treated with a gull so that he could see beneath the ocean, his friends became so alarmed at his tremendous ability that they destroyed it by throwing pads of this kind on a fire built beneath the bed on which he was sleeping. The basis of this medicine is the belief

that the proximity of such intensely human articles is enough 789
to counteract and render powerless anything of a superhuman nature. Likewise, when a certain woman came in contact [756]
with the War-Party of the Tide and began to exhibit symptoms of insanity, she was cured by drinking water in which other women had squeezed out their menstrual pads. Another defence is the burning of dried salmon, fumigation from which [828]
is particularly effective for one who suffers from nightmares. Other remedies already mentioned are to cut the right leg and smear a bullet with the resultant blood in order to kill a *sninq*, and to lacerate the inside of the mouth and spit to withstand a capsizing mountain.

The medicine most commonly taken is false hellebore, the 224
use of which was learnt by some ancient shaman. At dusk a 789
hunter should eat a small twig of it, raw; it draws from his stomach everything injurious particularly women's hairs, which are abhorred by animals, and ensures him success on the morrow. If he takes too much of it, he becomes ill and [752]
must swallow the antidote, mountain goat grease or marrow. He should also carry twigs of the plant with him, ready either to swallow or throw in the direction of any dreaded supernatural being whom he may encounter. Eagle down and dried salmon roe are sometimes similarly used.

The powers of a person who has obtained supernatural 756
ability, whether or not he is a shaman, can be destroyed by 789
similar means. For example, a lad treated so that he understands the speech of ravens, will lose his ability if he eats food cooked or prepared by a menstruating woman, by one who has lost her husband within the last year, or if he passes through the hole in the floor used by an adolescent girl. The last Bella Coola with this skill was deafened to the meaning of the birds' croaking by lying near his sister one night for warmth, since her mere proximity was enough to nullify his power. This 789
aspect of medicine merges with taboos. So, too, the power of an object can be destroyed by washing; an instance of this in

789 regard to two figurines prepared to cause love has been described.

755 In addition to these non-specialized medicines, the Bella Coola are acquainted with remedies for several specific ailments caused by supernatural beings. One of these, to cure a person in whose head a toad was formed, has already been described.

To Prevent Blindness

Loss of sight is caused by a bat flying into a man's face, or [753] by a raven's dropping falling upon him as he looks upward. [825] After either accident, rub a feather from any bird in a raven's liver and draw it across the eyes. The person practising this [785] cure must remain continent for one year or blindness will result.

To Prevent Paralysis of the Leg

If a man puts his foot in a hole so that he stumbles and falls, he will lose the use of that leg unless he counteracts the danger by placing a small stick upright in the cavity. In the summer of 1922 the writer noticed an old Bella Coola, with whom he was walking in the woods, break off a branch about two feet in length and place it in a hole where he had stumbled. He could give no explanation for his act, except that failure would cause him to lose the use of that leg.

To Prevent Paralysis of the Feet

If a person should happen to set his bare feet upon a dead wolf, he will lose the use of his lower limbs. The antidote to this has been forgotten within recent years, and patients are merely treated by shamans.

755. *To Prevent the Revenge of a Ghost*

775 The ghost of a murdered person usually tries to avenge himself on his killer, who can protect himself by obtaining a small piece from the body or clothing of his victim, a tuft of hair, a shred of cloth, or even a piece of earth from above his

grave. When, presently, he feels sick and believes that the ghost has caused the malady, he throws the object he has obtained on a fire and allows the smoke to drift over his body. It is not known how this destroys the power of the dead victim. 755 776

At present (1923), in case of unexpected death in which murder is suspected, the relatives keep the body under lock and key and watch carefully to see whether anyone tries to gain access to it. To endeavour to do so would be considered proof of guilt. [145] For the same reason, they may place boards over the grave and watch it for several weeks. As already described, a middle-aged woman died unexpectedly in 1923. Her father, believing that she had been murdered, expressed the opinion that a certain man was the criminal and that he would die within a year. He outlived this period by three weeks and it was generally agreed that the power of thought had been sufficient to cause the death. Apparently, the father shared this view and expected the ghost of the alleged murderer to be hostile, for he made two efforts to enter the shed where the body was lying, but the relatives of the deceased foiled him by locking all doors and windows. When he himself died a few weeks later, it was taken for granted that the ghost had exacted vengeance.

To Cure a Malady Caused by a Sorcerer

The most complicated medicine about which information 755 was obtained was one employed by an elderly Bella Coola who had incurred the enmity of a sorcerer. The latter had succeeded in breaking a triangular bone in the man's chest which would have caused his death if his mother had not consulted an old woman who knew the proper remedy for such an ailment. This knowledge had been handed down in her family for generations [424] and she was rewarded lavishly for her services. It will be convenient to refer to the patient as X and the old woman who treated him as Y.

X's mother requested the services of Y who agreed to assist and called upon her husband to help her. They scoured the

755 forest until they found four spruce saplings growing fairly close to one another and forming a line from east to west. They split each of them, inserted a block to hold the two halves apart, and prevented the upper end of the cut from extending too far by wrapping around it branches of the tree itself, taking care only to bend, not to break them off. Then Y drew through each cleft stem as many of the prickly branches as possible, fastening them in position with their own twigs. Finally, she bound near the base of each sapling a long cord consisting of alternate strands of dyed and undyed cedar-bark. On the day that these preparations were completed, Y boiled in water a number of branches of devil's club, swamp gooseberry, and other prickly plants. Then she told X's mother that all was in readiness for the next day, but that her son must hold intercourse that night. X was unmarried at the time, but his mother obtained the services of a woman for him.

At dawn the next day, before any of his neighbours were awake, X went to the spot where the four saplings had been prepared. With him were his mother and Y, who first washed him with the water in which the thorny branches had been boiled, then gave him his instructions: He was to force his way through the westernmost spruce, turn around on himself, sunwise, four times, pass to the next tree and repeat the same procedure; after this, he was to do the same at the third, and finally at the eastern sapling. With much difficulty, X pushed through the cleft stem, where the tied branches tore his flesh like needles, and rotated himself as he had been directed to do. Without waiting for Y, he acted similarly at the three other trees. As soon as X had passed through the first trunk, Y carefully pulled out the branches from the hole, knocked away the block that held the two sections apart, and loosened the long bough which had been wrapped around the top of the opening. When the sapling had sprung back to normal, she wound the long cedar-bark cord around the trunk, clockwise, so that it would knit together. The old woman followed X to each tree so that there was little indication of anything unusual

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having taken place when she had finished. Then the three went home, Y telling X that he must remain continent until she told him to do otherwise.

Three days later, Y told X's mother that her son would have to sleep that night with another woman whose services were obtained as before. This intercourse was on the fourth night after the first one. Meanwhile, Y and her husband had located and prepared another set of spruce saplings to which X was taken the following dawn. The same ritual was carried out without variation. Four nights later, he slept with another woman and passed through a third line of trees; four nights after that, the same procedure was repeated. Being unmarried, X required the services of four different women although if he had had a wife, she would have sufficed.

During the four days after the fourth set of trees had been used, Y collected, drop by drop, hemlock gum which had exuded from holes made by a small woodpecker.* X's mother accompanied the practitioner and heard her say something to the gum but could not understand what it was; X does not know whether the words were in a strange language or merely mumbled. Y also rifled a coffin to obtain the same bone as the one of X's which had been broken. X's mother was again present and heard Y speaking unintelligibly for some time as she cautiously opened the box, taking care to raise the farther side of the lid. The bone was covered with the hemlock gum and Y bound it, like a poultice, on X's chest on the fourth day after he had passed through the fourth set of saplings. It was left in position for four days, then thrown away as useless; it had "become nothing" for the malady and was consequently valueless. With its removal, the pain vanished. Y told X that he would have a long life, since no evil could harm him henceforth, but added that he would never be wealthy. X mentioned that both predictions have come to pass.

If the application of the gum had not been successful, Y would have waited for four days more and then given X a drink

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*Typically, the species could not be identified.

753 of water in which had been boiled eight splinters from a coffin. She would have obtained two from each side, and two from each end, in each case inserting the point of a crooked knife to pry loose a fragment of the wood, and then pulling it off in the same direction as the sun travels. It would have been immaterial from which aspect the first had been taken, but Y would have been careful to move around the coffin from east to south to west to north, corresponding to the course of the sun.

It is believed that no one has now the ability to use this cure.

Sorcerers

954 [424] Among the causative medicines of which knowledge has been handed down in various families for generations are secret means of killing. Every sorcerer must have such a possession, but he is not so branded unless he begins to exercise his powers for anti-social purposes. For example, if it be known that a [575] certain individual is able to cause death, the members of the *kusiut* society are eager to admit him to their group, so that his ability will be at their disposal to punish anyone who breaks their regulations. Likewise, if a chief decides that a certain [622] man should die, the power of his thoughts may suffice to cause the death, but the desired end will be effected more certainly by requesting aid from the owner of a means of killing. Such [956] an individual is frequently a shaman who is only too glad of an opportunity to exhibit his powers. The following methods of execution are said to have been employed socially, that is, with the connivance or at the request of chiefs or the members of the *kusiut* society:

(1) The executioner scratches for four successive nights on the door of the victim's house. If the latter suspects what is to take place, he may endeavour to escape by remaining awake which renders the scratching powerless. It is said that no one has been able to remain sleepless for more than three nights which gives the killer his opportunity.

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948
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(2) The executioner obtains the left, bottom rib from a man's skeleton, puts one end in the fire until it is alight, and keeps it smouldering by continuous puffing. When he knows that his victim is asleep, he knocks with the bone on the outside of his house and the sleeper dies immediately.

(3) The executioner holds a dried human hand before his victim's face, or knocks with it on his door, and he falls dead.

Individuals who have such knowledge are regarded with fear and a certain amount of respect, but it is recognized that they have every right to use their inherited abilities when requested to do so. A similar medicine was tried recently with fatal results:

A few years ago a number of Bella Coola, travelling to the interior along a trail over which some Carriers had just passed, noticed a place where one of the latter had been picking Indian rhubarb and had spit out the fibres after chewing. One of the party decided to test a medicine which had been handed down in his family for a long time. Catching a toad, he thrust some of the shreds down its throat, tied a loop of the fibre around its neck, and left the animal suspended to die of strangulation or starvation as the case might be. That night the Bella Coola overtook the carriers who had camped early owing to the illness of one of their party. He was lying on the ground, too sick to move, and complaining of a choking sensation in his throat. Realizing the seriousness of the case, the man who had fastened up the toad hurried back to release it, but found it dead. Before he regained his companions, the Carrier had likewise choked to death. The efficacy of the medicine was thus proved.

Another man stated that a similar means of killing was to use in the same way fibres left exposed from bark which had been stripped for eating. There are believed to be many secret means of killing which, since they have often been employed indiscriminately, are thought to have had an appreciable effect in reducing the numbers of the Bella Coola.

The most common method of execution is by obtaining something belonging to the victim, and subjecting it to the fate desired for its owner. A few years ago, for example, the members of the *kusiut* society wanted to frighten one of their

754 members, and delegated the task to a man who was known to be skilled in such matters. The latter stole some shreds of the offender's clothing, placed them in a human skull which he fastened to a long rope and threw into a swift stretch of the river. As the rapids tossed the skull to and fro, the person whose clothing was within began to feel uneasy; first he experienced a jumping pain in his head, but as the wild movements continued, he became light-headed and finally delirious. At this juncture, it was decided to pull back the skull, but the rope broke and it was carried away downstream. Nothing could save the man and he died within a few hours. This particular incident occurred among the Bella Bella, but it is agreed that it might have happened in Bella Coola.

[554] The mingled fear of, and aversion to, a person who knows some such secret method of killing, fades into insignificance compared to the extreme loathing of every Bella Coola for sorcerers. Their methods of killing may be similar to the ones just described, but they are evil creatures who practise secretly, working entirely to gratify their own personal desires. Not [683] only is the murder of a sorcerer a virtuous act, but the relatives of one should be put to death without mercy. There is no single factor which has caused so much hatred, bitterness, and suspicion as belief in the activities of sorcerers. Conversion to [797] Christianity has scarcely altered it, and men who have been members of the church for ten to twenty years remain fully convinced that some of their associates have loathsome abilities as sorcerers. In many parts of the world, belief in black magic and witchcraft is one of the last native convictions to pass away, and it seems probable that this will be the case in Bella Coola although, of course, it will become increasingly difficult to obtain information about the subject.

The actual methods used by different sorcerers vary, although most of them require an article which has been in contact with their intended victim. Consequently, they seek pieces of soiled clothing, nail parings, hair clippings, spittle, and other objects of the same type which are usually concealed by their owners for safety. Judas, an old Bella Coola believed 754 to be a sorcerer, has been seen to scrape up the moist earth [683] where a man has urinated; in former times anyone doing such a suspicious act would have been killed. The article obtained is hidden and kept for future use, and if the practitioner wishes to inflict pain or death, he places it in contact with some potent medicine. Human bones are frequently employed for this purpose, although the most powerful is said to be grease obtained by boiling flesh cut from the inner side of the thigh of a recently buried corpse. To obtain either of these, graves must be robbed, another reason for hating sorcerers.

Secrecy is essential, so a sorcerer is usually assisted by his children, and in this way he has a better chance of obtaining articles belonging to different people without arousing suspicion. The necessary knowledge can accordingly be trans- [424] mitted from generation to generation, sometimes without the slightest inkling of it becoming known. Even if a man is found out, he may be able to bribe his discoverer to silence.

Sometimes two from different tribes work in partnership to 646 lessen the danger of practising their rites near the village of a 754 victim. For example, a Bella Coola sorcerer may send an article to an accomplice in Bella Bella for placing in contact with strong medicine; this causes the victim to languish and die while the person responsible continues his usual routine of life around the village, suspected by no one. The commencement of such a partnership is a matter of great difficulty, since anyone who admits his crimes places himself in the power of his confidant. Sometimes, however, rumours that a certain individual is practising malevolent magic reach a foreign sorcerer who needs an accomplice. If he considers that the information is authentic, he may admit his own prowess and suggest that they work together. Such an arrangement is profitable to both parties, and a partnership so formed may continue for generations.

Sorcerers display considerable ingenuity in arranging that 754 their skill shall bring them pecuniary benefits as well as the 756

754 756 gratification of killing their enemies. To achieve this end, a member of the family claims to be a shaman and his relatives loudly acclaim him. It is not difficult for a man with skill in conjuring to perform some simple dramatic act, probably one carried out by an ancient shaman, which he announces has been shown to him by a supernatural being who has given him power to cure the sick. Then the sorcerer selects a suitable victim and causes him to become ill by placing something taken from him in contact with his medicine. If the malefactor is fortunate, the victim will consult the "shaman" who will effect a cure and be paid for it, ignorant of the fact that his recovery has been due to the removal of the article by the practitioner's accomplice. This deception is especially difficult to expose if the sorcerer has a box containing grease boiled from human bodies, since the sickness increases or diminishes accordingly to the depth to which the article is sunk. This is one of the ways in which some shamans have built up great reputations as curers.

The psychology of sorcery is similar to that of other kinds of magic. It is not possible for the malefactor to tell his victim that he has stolen a nail paring, for example, and that he will die because it has been placed in a decoction of human grease. But if the attending shaman is an accomplice, he can inform the sufferer that his malady has been caused by a sorcerer and this belief profoundly affects him. He feels that he will die unless a remedy be found, and if the shaman assures him that he has rendered the evil influence impotent, his chances of recovery are increased accordingly. So, likewise, the members of families who possess remedies against the activities of sorcerers often work in conjunction with one. It is therefore not surprising that the Bella Coola should firmly believe in their machinations and affirm that they have killed many thousands of people in the course of generations. The belief in magic would itself be sufficient to explain this, but it is strengthened by the social and economic aspects of a sorcerer's

754 171 vocation. The container in which the potent mixture is kept

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is spoken of in the Chinook jargon as a *mesatchie box*, that is, a 754
"dirty," "unclean," or "repulsive" box, and this term is one 171
which is mentioned whenever an unexpected death takes place, or whenever a coastal Indian is accused of loitering around a deserted camp or of stealing into another's house. The belief is not limited to the Bella Coola, but has formed the basis for criminal cases all over the coast of British Columbia. It is [554]
difficult to find words sufficiently strong to express the disgust, loathing, and fear with which the Bella Coola regard a person suspected of sorcery.

Ability in this respect carries with it certain prohibitions. 754
A sorcerer would lose his power if he should wash or blow his [515]
nose except when about to commit murder. The one old Bella [827]
Coola now thought to be a sorcerer never washes; he knows that if he did so, he would be immediately accused of plotting someone's death. This man is greatly feared, as he is said to have a collection of spittle from every member of the tribe; efforts have been made to break into his house and steal this, but it has never been found. He takes credit for the death of at least one white man in the valley. A peculiar impediment suffered by all sorcerers is a prohibition against turning around, although no one knows why doing so should deprive them of their strength. The explanation may be that their power would recoil upon themselves, a concept well illustrated by the following incident:

> When the first Christian Bella Coola left the old village to settle near the mission station, they were regarded with dislike and suspicion by their fellow-tribesmen. One day, one of them happened to follow a path through the woods which led her to a rude shelter in which was a bundle. Hastily summoning her fellows, they opened it and found an article of clothing belonging to each Christian. The man who told this incident described his fear at finding a dirty shirt of his own among the others. They felt that the garments had been collected by a young man who claimed to be a shaman, but whom they suspected to be merely the accomplice of a sorcerer, and this was soon proved to be the case. He was insufficiently trained; instead of touching the patient's body with his stick, he used to suck wherever the pain was located and then

754 drink water. This washed the sickness down into his own stomach, which rotted away so that he died. Recovery of their clothes saved the Christians from injury on this occasion.

Although the Bella Coola suspect that several of their tribesmen are sorcerers, their work is so carefully concealed that it is naturally difficult to obtain evidence against them. A few years ago, however, the two daughters of a *Tāl'io* man were searching for a calf lost by their father when they found a coal-oil can half hidden in a bush near the pasture fence. They peered into it, and were shocked to find a decayed human leg. They hurried home to their father, who investigated and found that it was the portion from knee to ankle, and that it was partly covered by a sock made for himself by his wife. This so terrified him that he took the find to the Indian Agent, who is believed still to have it. The finder was convinced that the deaths of several of his children must have been caused by earlier activities of the same, or another sorcerer. He suspected another *Tāl'io* man who had cleared a small farm in the vicinity, and who asked the two girls whether they had found a jam-tin near the place where the leg had been discovered.

The Bella Coola agree that sorcerers were more powerful in early times than at present, and recount a number of stories describing their activities. The following examples require no further explanation and clearly illustrate their beliefs.

A BELLA BELLA SORCERER

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754 Not many years ago, as a Bella Bella lad lay dozing, he saw a man approaching him with a stick to one end of which was fastened a tuft of undyed cedar-bark. He quickly realized that it must be a sorcerer who had come to collect some of his exhaled breath as a personal possession, so he pretended to be asleep. The villain came nearer, held the sponge-like bark before the sleeper's face for a moment, and then stole away. He did not know that his intended victim was following him. The sorcerer entered his house, cautiously drew out a human leg bone and tied the tuft of bark to it; then, wearied by the strain, he went to sleep. This was the victim's opportunity. He crept into the house, took another piece of bark, held it before the sleeper's face, removed the one stained

with his own breath, and replaced it with that containing the sorcerer's. 539

Before dawn the next morning, the sorcerer, ignorant of the substitution, took the bone and left the house. The youth had been watching 754 and followed him to the edge of the sea, where he laid his bundle in a hole in the rocks through which the rising tide was sending up a miniature water-spout. The sorcerer went away at once, giving the lad an opportunity to remove the bone and secrete it in another cavity. He knew that the wicked man would soon become ill and would suspect that someone had tampered with the bone. So it proved. As the water whirled the bark containing his exhaled breath, the sorcerer began to feel light-headed and rushed off to the hole in the rocks. Meanwhile the intended victim had summoned his neighbours to watch what might transpire. The man searched frantically, but of course could not find the bone, so, as the water rose and covered the bark, he was impelled to plunge repeatedly beneath the surge, until he was drowned.

THE OUTWITTING OF A SORCERER

Over one hundred years ago there was living in *Qomqo·ts* a powerful chief who owned a salmon-weir. Though an expert fisherman himself, he relied to a great extent on the assistance of a commoner who was still more efficient. One summer this man died suddenly. Immediately after the funeral, the chief examined his trap, removed the fish, and returned home, physically weary from his labour and more than ever regretting the loss of his assistant. For some reason he could not sleep, so, after tossing for an hour or more, he decided to gather firewood. There was a late-rising full moon, so he had no difficulty in seeing his road as he climbed the small mountain behind the village, carrying only an iron axe. He had cut a bundle and was ready to return when he heard a grunting sound as though someone with a heavy burden were climbing the slope. Putting down his load, he hid himself in such a position that clear moonlight shone upon the path. After waiting a few minutes, he saw a figure approaching; it was *Omqwak*, a local shaman, carrying a coffin upon his back. Now thoroughly suspicious, the chief decided to follow, trusting to his axe for protection.

Omqwak passed over the crest, descended the other side, and then ascended the slope of the mountain on the east, in long tangents to hide his course. The chief had no difficulty in following him unobserved, and finally watched his unsuspecting guide put down the coffin and clear away the brush-wood. He seemed to be lifting something, which was followed by a grating sound as if a large stone was being dragged across another; then he disappeared from sight and the chief realized that *Omqwak* had

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descended into an underground house of which the combination door and smoke-vent had been covered with stones and small sticks.

The chief crawled to the entrance and looked within. Round the walls were seated the corpses of all those who had died recently in the village, and *Omqwak* was removing the body of the expert fisherman from its coffin. He put it in line with the others and put on a dance-apron decorated with human finger and toe nails. Then he began to dance, at the same time pressing the lever of a mechanical contrivance which caused the corpses to beat time with sticks and even to leap into the air at intervals as do living singers. It was most weird and uncanny, but after watching for a few minutes, the chief was forced to cough. Although this was the first intimation to *Omqwak* that he was being observed, he betrayed no surprise and invited the cougher to come down the ladder into his house. The chief did so, and he was received in a courteous and hospitable manner by his host who frankly admitted that he was a sorcerer, and added that his corpses were just dancing to welcome the new arrival.[6] He showed his guest everything of interest in the dwelling, including a box containing potent medicine in which was laid the skin of a man's left hand. He explained that he frequently took this to the village and, if he desired to kill anyone, would place within the palm a tuft of cedar-bark on which his victim had breathed, then close the fingers upon it. This caused death almost instantly. The chief, though keenly interested, never relaxed his vigilance for a moment, knowing that the sorcerer would not have been so communicative unless he had felt confident of his ability to kill his hearer. Towards morning, *Omqwak* suggested that they return home, picked up the skinned hand, and was the first to climb the ladder, intending to stun the chief when his head appeared over the surface. His pursuer followed close at his heels and finally, at the top of the ladder, butted the sorcerer with his head so that he sprawled on the ground and the chief was able to emerge with safety. Unperturbed by this first failure, *Omqwak* covered the entrance to his house so carefully that a man might have passed over it without suspecting its presence. The sorcerer wanted the chief to precede him homewards, but the latter was too cautious for any such subterfuge and insisted upon following close at the heels of the malefactor. They did not separate until they reached the village, where each proceeded to his own house.

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[6] Although this account is supposed to be a historical record of a comparatively recent incident, items of a supernatural type have obviously been added. The man who told the story did not seem to realize the difficulty of a mechanical contrivance to make corpses beat time, nor did it strike him that the dance of welcome must have been adopted from the similar ceremony performed by ghosts. The whole story was related as an unusual one but not of a supernatural nature.

The chief knew that his life was in serious danger although he had won the first round. Consequently, instead of lying down to sleep, he seated himself with his arms stretched out before him on a box and his head supported on them so that he could watch through his fingers. As he expected, *Omqwak* soon came stealing in, holding a tuft of undyed cedar-bark. He made no movement, even when the sorcerer held this before his face and stole away with it when it had been breathed upon. The brave man knew that his life would be in constant danger unless he could outwit his enemy and that this was his opportunity. He waited for about one hour, then quietly entered *Omqwak*'s house where the sorcerer was sleeping peacefully, thinking that all danger was over, and the hand-skin was lying in plain sight on a box. The chief stealthily took a tuft of cedar-bark, held it before the sleeper's nose till it was impregnated with his breath, and then placed it within the skin from which he withdrew the piece already there. Having accomplished his purpose, he returned home without disturbing the sleeper.

The chief knew that *Omqwak* would wash the following morning if he intended to kill, so he remained awake and was watching the sorcerer's house before daybreak. As he expected, the malefactor presently appeared, carrying his chamber-vessel, and went to the river. First he smeared himself with urine and walked in up to his knees, remained for a few minutes, and came ashore again. The second time, he waded in until the water was up to his thighs; the third time, he went on till it was shoulder-deep. Sorcerers always wash in this way in order that the four parts of the body shall be covered successively, although no one knows why this should be done by them alone. The hidden chief knew that *Omqwak* would meet disaster when he bathed for the fourth time since the skin, carried beneath his arm-pit, would then be beneath the surface for a few moments. So it transpired. He dipped his head, but instead of being able to raise it, his feet floated above the surface, and he remained in that position, slowly drowning. This was the fate which he had destined for the chief whose breath he had placed within his skinned hand, but he was unaware of the substitution which, of course, re-acted upon himself.

The watcher hastily roused his neighbours who came running to the bank half-clad and rubbing their eyes. They brought ashore the corpse of the drowned man while the chief recounted all that he had seen and done during the night. As soon as it was sufficiently light a number of men accompanied him to the underground house in the mountains from which the bodies were brought back and reburied by their relatives. Previous to this time, no one had suspected *Omqwak* of sorcery, but as soon as the discovery was made, the angry people slew all his relatives

539 754 except an infant daughter. She grew up, married, and was the mother of the old Bella Coola, about seventy years of age in 1923, who is so loathed as a sorcerer. It is he who has the collection of spittle, and it is believed that, like his grandfather, he is the owner of a skinned and stuffed left hand with which he can kill a man as surely as with a rifle.

THE DISCOVERY OF TWO SORCERERS

Many years ago there lived at *Stuie* two young men who were constant companions; they always hunted and travelled together, and were determined to share each other's fortune, no matter what it might be. One day they agreed to go up the valley to visit some friends, but decided to postpone their departure until dusk. One of the two went out for a short walk and failed to return by the time appointed; his comrade sought him everywhere and finally hurried off up the trail, thinking that his friend must have started before him. He soon heard sounds of laboured breathing as if people were carrying a heavy burden, and could just distinguish two men carrying a coffin on poles between them. He realized that they must be sorcerers and that their inability to turn around would give him an advantage. Stealing up behind them, he pushed the rear man, not only causing him to stumble, but the one in front as well, since their burden was resting between them. Neither could turn around to see who had discovered them, and they became more and more terrified as the brave youth first pushed, and then pulled the one in the rear. [774] Suddenly he called out, we·, so loudly in their ears that the sudden start expelled their spirits and they fell to earth as if dead. The lad watched their gradual recovery, feeling confident that his partner must be within ear-shot and would come hurrying back to his assistance if necessary. As soon as the sorcerers had revived, one of them said angrily to the boy:

"You will die presently."

"No," he answered. "It is you who are in grave peril."

At this point he called loudly for his companion who was so far ahead that he could barely hear the other's voice; he answered the shout and began to run back. The sorcerers, trying to make the best of a bad situation, mocked him by advising him to call again and to bring more helpers if he wanted to escape death. When his friend had come so close that he could see what was taking place, the youth called out to him:

"Partner! They say that I am in danger."

"No," the other answered. "It is they who will die."

When he joined the group the four began to discuss what was to be done. The sorcerers begged their discoverers not to expose their mis-

doings, and offered to make them members of the *kusiut* society in return 539
for their silence. Though uninitiated persons, even this tempting bribe 754
was refused by the two youths. Next, each of the malefactors offered a daughter as wife to each of the partners, and they accepted this bargain. For their part, the sorcerers were glad to escape at any cost, since they had been caught red-handed; they knew that henceforth they would have to assist their captors, but this was preferable to exposure.

The two groups parted company; the boys continued their journey to the upper village and the sorcerers went on their way to some cave in the mountains. Within a few weeks, each youth married the daughter of one of the malefactors, with whose assistance they were able to give potlatches and become influential personages.

A FAMILY OF KWATNA SORCERERS

Near the village of Kwatna there used to be two cemeteries. One was on a small point of ground at the mouth of the river which became an island at high tide; here were interred the bodies of chiefs alone, a custom said to be without parallel on the coast. It is not known why there should have been this special burial-ground, but the place was always spoken of as "The Chiefs' Island." Instead of being buried, coffins containing commoners were laid on ledges of rock at the base of a cliff behind [764]
the village; this custom, though unusual, is known elsewhere on the [171]
coast, at Kimsquit and Port Simpson, for example.

Many generations ago, there was a time when the corpses of commoners frequently disappeared from the ledges on which they had been placed, and although it was believed that a sorcerer was responsible, no one knew whom to blame. One old woman had lost nearly all her numerous relatives when she realized that, though there had been many deaths in the village and some families had been almost wiped out, no members of one group had been taken. This roused her suspicions; she soon noticed that whenever anyone was sick, four brothers of the family in question always made some plausible excuse to leave the village and proceed up the other arm of the inlet. She concluded that this could be no mere coincidence, the four must be sorcerers. Within a short while, another of her relatives fell ill and died in spite of all that could be done; this reduced her family to herself and her infant. On the day after the funeral, the four brothers said that they wanted to gather hemlock boughs and set off in a canoe up the other arm of the inlet for the purpose. They did not come back at night and the villagers assumed that they had been delayed and had camped. The bereaved woman, however, who had hidden herself below the village, saw the brothers paddle back around the

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point and conceal their canoe beneath a bushy tree instead of landing at the village. More suspicious than ever, she followed the four and was able to keep in touch with them in spite of the necessity of carrying her baby. They went to the cemetery, placed the coffin on poles, and two of them carried it away with the others in close attendance.

The mother, still clutching her child, followed the brothers up the side of a steep mountain behind Kwatna. They avoided all trails and travelled in zigzags until they reached the base of a precipice where a tall tree was growing. The mother, who was not far behind, could see that its upper branches grew across to touch the cliff at a point where the mouth of a cave was visible. The coffin was placed on the ground, three of the brothers climbed the tree, and passed from it into the opening in the rock. From this they shoved out a plank to form a narrow bridge to the upper trunk, and dropped a long rope which the one below fastened around the coffin; then it was hauled up, the fourth brother climbed the tree and all disappeared from sight. The woman continued to remain in hiding, but before long her curiosity was piqued by seeing smoke drift out from the opening. She decided that she must see what was taking place, so she nursed her infant to keep it quiet, and then began the ascent. Without difficulty she reached a point from which she could peer within, and saw the four melting down the grease from the dismembered body of her kinsman. They were sorcerers without doubt, and she noted that they were preserving with care all the fat that exuded from the inside of the thighs. Each was wearing a mask, but she was able to recognize them by their figures.

When the poisonous decoction had been prepared, the sorcerers fell asleep, still wearing their masks. Made bold by her longing for revenge, the woman crept across the plank without disturbing the sleepers. Cautiously she picked up the spoon which they had used for stirring the mixture, lifted a few drops in it and held it to the mouth of the one whom she recognized as the oldest brother. He did not stir. With a quick, firm pressure she stamped upon his stomach, causing him to wake and swallow with a gasp; the poison was so potent that he died without making a sound. She took another spoonful of the brew and gave it to the second sorcerer in the same way and with the same result, and in this way killed all four. Stopping only to fill a receptacle with the brew, the woman climbed down the tree and hurried back to Kwatna.

Instead of describing what she had seen and done, the woman determined to wipe out the relatives of the sorcerers. So she invited the whole village to a feast, allotting the proper place to each family. This whole procedure was unusual because she had killed no large game, but there is always a good deal of latitude allowed in such matters, particularly as everyone sympathized with the hostess on account of her many bereavements. 539 Her only assistant was a woman who, like herself, had lost all her kinsmen. The food provided was hemlock-bark dipped in fish-oil, 754 but the hostess contrived that every relative of the sorcerers should receive a portion dipped in poison instead. They all started to eat at the same time, and all fell dead simultaneously without a word.

Instantly wild confusion broke out and the guests exclaimed that they were being served poison. Unperturbed, the woman explained everything; how she had first become suspicious, how she had followed the four brothers, and all that had resulted. A party set out at once under her guidance and found that everything she had said was true. In this way perished all the relatives of the sorcerers except one man who happened to be absent at the time. One of his descendants is now living in Bella Coola and is regarded wtih a certain amount of suspicion, although there is no evidence that he or any of his relatives have practised sorcery for generations.

A BELLA COOLA SORCERER

Since the introduction of muskets, there dwelt in the lower Bella Coola valley a shaman, *Ānusaiksaixsaix·āls* by name; he was a regular [756] practitioner, able both to heal the sick or to cause death. When using his power beneficially, he shook a rattle containing a rock-crystal, but when he was requested to kill, he used one that appeared to be identical but contained human teeth and wolf fangs. In some unknown manner these were lost, which prevented him from slaying a man as requested by the chiefs of his village. One April day he mentioned his difficulty casually to a certain *Tcika* who surprised him by replying:

"I can supply you with teeth and you will have greater power than ever."

The two were alone at the time and *Tcika*, having admitted that he was a sorcerer, suggested that they form a partnership. He must have felt confident that *Ānusaiksaixsaix·āls* would agree, as indeed he did gladly. *Tcika* explained that the necessary knowledge had been handed down in his family for generations, but that he had only recently begun to use it to avenge a slight at a feast of seals.

Next morning *Tcika* guided *Ānusaiksaixsaix·āls* up the mountain on the north side of the extreme head of North Bentinck Arm, just west of the Necleetsconnay River. Hunters frequently ranged over this area, but no one had ever seen a sorcerer's box there. *Tcika* led the way to a small rock shelter beneath which was concealed a chest about eight feet long. He kicked it four times with his left foot, and called out four times:

"Wake up!"

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Tcika then raised the cover, and his companion saw that it contained a number of separate compartments, formed by vertical strips criss-crossing within, and that the whole bottom was covered with a thick, black, oily liquid. On top of the cube-like divisions lay a badly decomposed corpse which *Ānusaiksaixsaix·āls* recognized as that of a youth who had disappeared from the village the previous July and who was thought to have been drowned. *Tcika* explained the mechanism of the box: Each section was for a different disease, stomach trouble in one, heart failure in another, consumption in a third, sudden death in a fourth, and so on. Whenever he wanted to cause a specific disease, he would dip a personal possession of the victim's in the oil at the bottom of the proper compartment and leave it there. All that was then necessary to improve the patient's condition was to raise the article slightly in the liquid, whereas to lower it increased the force of the malady, and to leave it covered entirely caused death. It was generally known that such methods were used by sorcerers, but this was the first box that *Ānusaiksaixsaix·āls* had ever seen and he was keenly interested. He inquired the purpose of the boy's body, and *Tcika* replied that he had killed him with the intention of taking his skin to use against the lad's relatives, but had been forced to carry away the whole body owing to the difficulty of removing the skin alone. Whenever he wanted to kill a person quietly and rapidly, it was only necessary to lay an article which had belonged to the victim on the back of the neck of the corpse. Death resulted immediately, since this was the spot where the spirit had resided during life. After answering his friend's questions, *Tcika* fumbled around in the bottom of the box and drew forth a number of wolf teeth which he gave to the grateful *Ānusaiksaixsaix·āls*. Then the two went home to their respective villages, after promising each other mutual support and secrecy.

Although the two malefactors took every precaution not to be seen together too often, rumours began to circulate that they were partners, and that *Tcika* was a sorcerer. There was no proof of this, but the suspected man became so unpopular that he was virtually expelled from his village. More angry than perturbed at this, he moved three miles up the valley to the town in which *Ānusaiksaixsaix·āls* was living. After waiting for a few weeks to allay suspicion, *Tcika* determined to murder the chief who had been the prime mover in his expulsion, and sent his son to steal the victim's chamber-pot. His wife discovered the theft the same night and promptly roused the whole village, realizing the danger to her husband if it should fall into the hands of a sorcerer; diligent search was made, but of course the article could not be found, since the thief had taken it away to his new home. *Tcika* placed the vessel

in a compartment of his box containing a bear's bladder tied into sections; 539
this caused his enemy to suffer stricture and soon to die in agony.

Following the usual custom, the relatives of the dead man smeared 754
their faces with ashes which they left in position for a year. The widow, who had loved her husband very dearly, allowed this indication of mourning to remain even longer than the customary period. On several occasions *Tcika* made somewhat slighting remarks about her excessive grief, and when one of his sons also commented upon it, she became suspicious and told her relatives. One of them was a chief of the village where *Tcika* was then living and where he was already regarded with distrust. This man visited the home of his bereaved kinswoman and called the chiefs of her village together to discuss the matter, and to inform them of the suspicions which his conduct had aroused in his new home. Three days later, *Tcika* happened to come to the village and was at once summoned to the house where the chiefs had assembled to interrogate him. *Tcika* sat on a box in the centre of the group and denied, slowly and positively, that he had any knowledge of sorcery, adding that his poverty confirmed his statement. At this moment *Ánusaiksaixsaix·âls* came rushing into the house, furiously brandishing a rifle, and exclaiming that it was scandalous the way in which unjust accusations were being levelled at *Tcika*. One of the chiefs quietly slipped behind the shaman, knocked his fire-arm upwards so that it exploded harmlessly in the air, and threw him to the ground where he threatened him with a large knife.

"I will not brook any interference from you in this matter," he said.

This so frightened *Ánusaiksaixsaix·âls* that he blurted out that he knew *Tcika* was a sorcerer and that he had seen his box containing a decayed human body. *Tcika* was less excited than anyone else, and slipped out of the house in the confusion, merely pausing to ask:

"What are you going to do about it?"

He returned to his new village where, of course, the news soon fol- 539
lowed of what had been discovered. The chiefs decided that he must be
killed, and that the most convenient occasion would be at a feast of seals 754
which was to take place in the near future. *Tcika* accepted an invitation 683
to this and was slain while he was busy handling his spoon. One of his sons was killed with him, another who escaped through a hole in the floor was slaughtered near the village. His two brothers were absent on a hunting expedition, but a party tracked them and slew them in their camp before they knew that their evil deeds had been found out. *Tcika*'s two daughters were allowed to live, but were given to a famous warrior who kept them practically as prisoners. *Ánusaiksaixsaix·âls*, who seems to have escaped all punishment for his share in the affair, guided a party to the sorcerer's box. It was found to be old and moss-covered, obviously 539
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539 one used by some of *Tcika*'s ancestors. It was brought to the ocean and
754 thrown in.

TABOOS

784 The Bella Coola regard as taboos those injunctions that are observed in the belief that their neglect would cause automatic punishment. The mechanism of enforcement is frequently not understood; it is enough to know that an unpleasant result would follow disobedience. Some taboos are in force at all times, others only during certain seasons of the year, and still others at critical periods of life. Since the psychology of such [789] beliefs is essentially magical rather than religious, they could justifiably be grouped at this point. Unfortunately, to do so would destroy the continuity of accounts of birth, adolescence, death, ceremonial chastity, and many other aspects of Bella Coola life subject to taboo. The injunctions enforced by the River Guardian, the restrictions observed by a girl after puberty, the continence required after different medicines, all are taboos, disregard of which brings certain punishment. These and many others have already been described in connection with the activities to which they pertain. It is doubtful whether the Bella Coola have a single word to describe taboos [783] in general, though they are all regarded as *sxaiäx*, that is, as something which is ceremonially unclean.

Scarcely to be distinguished from taboos are ceremonial errors, *yen·imut* or *kän·imut*. Failure to give presents to heralds when a seat breaks beneath a chief or a dancer stumbles, or unnecessary activity during the year's waiting for the fruition of supernatural good fortune are ritual mistakes of this type. Neglect of such regulations brings punishment, though of a lesser kind than the breaking of taboos. If the [688] error has been in connection with a ceremony, the offence can [203] be wiped out by presents to heralds, and the terms *yen·imut* and *kän·imut* are likewise applied to some of their prerogatives such as the ability to claim clothing during the marriage of a chief's child.

Most taboos and errors can best be described with other

phases of activity, leaving here only certain rules about diet 784
and a number of prohibitions which hunters must observe.

FOOD TABOOS OBSERVED BY WOMEN 262

Women must not eat bear meat. To do so would derange 562
the catamenia and cause profuse growth of hair. [841]

Women of child-bearing age must not eat beaver. To do
so would cause a difficult delivery. [826]

A woman of child-bearing age must not eat toasted salmon [844]
until the sticks have been removed which held it in front of the [845]
fire. She will bear twins if this injunction is disregarded.

TABOOS OBSERVED BY HUNTERS

No hunter or fisherman may leave the village in the morning 224
if he has been foolish enough to break the night's fast. It is [226]
customary to depart at dawn and take a small meal when
nearing the hunting or fishing-ground. [264]

No hunter may drink water in which dog salmon have been soaked. Animals dislike this liquid and avoid a man with it in his stomach.

When traps have been set, and a party of hunters is sitting around the camp-fire in the evening, no one must pass between it and one of his fellows. If this should be done, heedlessly, animals would disregard the bait that has been set out.

When mountain goat hunters are travelling, the most expert
must lead the party. When he sits down, so must the others,
and no one can change places with him. This is said to be a [171]
custom of the Carriers as well as of the Bella Coola.

When a hunter is cutting up a bear, he must be careful not [825]
to cut a vein which is said to run across the chest and down [753]
each fore-paw. To do so causes sickness.

When a hunter kills a bear, he must place either the skull [732]
or the whole head in a tree near the scene of the kill, otherwise
he will become blind. In some families, the men remove only
an eye, place it in a notched stick and set this under an over-

224 [732] hanging rock where no rain can penetrate. Long ago, some hunter failed to do this and became blind in consequence, hence the rite has since been carried out.

When a hunter is in the field, his wife must not swing. To do this causes him to go up into lofty and dangerous places as she rises on the swing, and also destroys the power laboriously accumulated by ceremonial chastity.

Ritual Acts

796 226 789 Ceremonialism is an extremely important aspect of Bella Coola life, but most of their rites are social or religious rather than magical, so that descriptions of them belong to other chapters. In connection with the taking of the first olachen and salmon, however, a number of ritual acts are performed to bring about desired ends; the element of propitiation is not entirely absent, but on the whole they may be considered as magical.

RITES CONNECTED WITH THE FIRST OLACHEN

226 796 574 At the height of the olachen run, the fish are so abundant that they can be taken profitably in large purse-nets. They do not, however, come simultaneously, and eager fishermen keep watching for their arrival and catching the straggling forerunners in hand dip-nets. These fish must not be eaten immediately. Each fisherman arranges a box in the front part of his house in which he deposits them as taken; if several men are doing this in a single dwelling, one box for each will be arranged near the front-door. Whenever a dance is held, eagle down is blown over the receptacle to placate the olachen and prevent them from being disturbed by the noise. As soon as a man has caught enough for a feast, he invites all his fellows to his house and the fish are distributed. It is taboo for any woman to share this meal, and it is most improper for a man to summon his neighbours until he has enough olachen to allow each guest to carry home a plentiful supply for his family. In former times, there used to be a number of meals of this kind,

since each fisherman provided one when his box was filled. 226

No one is allowed to drink water immediately after eating 796
the first olachen of the spring, since to do so would cause a 574
flood. It is considered most improper for a child to cry soon
after partaking of this food; if he does so, he is quieted by [865]
having nettles stuffed into his mouth. As already described,
if a person dies before the first fish have passed through his
bowels, a shaman must wipe his lips with cedar-bark.

After the first meal of olachen, stakes for the nets can be 226
driven, and the restrictions become less exacting. Women are
not allowed to assist in fishing, but the men devote their full [562]
time to the task, working with zest and energy.[7] An abundant
supply of olachen is a source of joy, and all listen eagerly for
the singing of the thrush, *smuxmuxaxls*, which signifies that the [825]
nets are full to bursting. Half jocularly, people invite the bird
to come and eat, but his melody is interpreted as:

"I shall eat when the river is full."

RITES CONNECTED WITH THE FIRST SPRING SALMON[8]

Salmon is the most important article of Bella Coola diet 226
and the rites which accompany the earliest taking of the fish 796
are relatively complicated. [262]

When the first spring salmon have been caught, they are laid in the canoe with their heads all pointing eastward, upstream. The fisherman poles to shore, but instead of landing his catch, he fastens the salmon to a stake driven at the edge of the bank so that they remain in the water. A number of posts are usually placed in readiness, each decorated with alternate spirals of dyed and undyed cedar-bark and crowned with an eagle's tail. Each day one or two more fish may be caught, but all are left in the water until the first have become soft, thus giving sufficient time for the necessary preparations
on shore. It is the duty of every owner of a salmon-weir to
build near its end a so-called Spring Salmon House, a shed-like [343]

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[7] For a description of olachen fishing, see Appendix A.

[8] *Cf.* Boas, p. 78.

226 796 [343] structure with a roof but without side walls. To this the successful fisherman brings long strings of dyed and undyed cedar-bark, eagle down, and spoons made of maple-bark; in this task he is assisted by his relatives as well as by anyone else willing to help.

When all has been prepared, the fisherman asks the men of the village to gather on the bank to assist him. No one is compelled to do so, but in actual fact everyone is glad to be present unless prevented by some valid reason. A friend takes a canoe pole and points at the head of the first salmon, while all call in unison, *xak'loi·*, a word for which no meaning is known, and which is said to have been used unintelligibly for many generations. If he is standing on the south bank of the stream, the fisherman passes his left hand outside his right, seizes the fish behind the neck with the former, and by the tail with the latter; then he turns around sunwise, uncrossing his arms, so that his catch is still pointing upstream. If the village is on the north side of the river, the position of the hands is reversed. He carries the salmon to the Spring Salmon House and places it on a layer of fresh cottonwood and willow leaves spread over the ground. A young assistant, who is decorated with bands of dyed and undyed cedar-bark, lifts from his left arm one of a number of two-foot strips of the same material carried there and lays it over the salmon's head so that part of the string is within its mouth. As he does this he says:

Ipāxollai, *qāmxāmilao*,[4] "Accept, O Salmon."

Qāmxāmila is not the usual word for salmon, but signifies rather, "Food"; it is the designation used by supernatural beings for these fish and is hence applied by *smmq* to their prey, human beings.

After this has been done, eagle down is blown over the fish. A second salmon is likewise taken from the river, with the same cry of *xak'loi·*, laid with its head on its predecessor's tail, and the same rite carried out. This is repeated till all are arranged in line, with their heads pointing upstream. The

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[4] The vocative form of the word.

women listening from the village are able to tell how many 226
have been caught from the number of times the cry *xak'loi·* is 796
raised.

Then the salmon are cut up (only shell knives may be [412]
used for the purpose) and cooked. Everything must be used,
heads, bones, and entrails, the only refuse being the blood
which is scraped from the leaves and carried into the woods.
The leaves themselves, and the strings of dyed and undyed
cedar-bark are thrown into the river in accordance with a
desire expressed by *Noakxnm* long ago. When everything is 226
ready for a meal, the men take their places in two rows, 796
facing each other across a coarse bark mat. Bark spoons 574
have been provided, and when the heralds call for food, the
fisherman brings the heads of the salmon and the guests
make the motions of eating, though in reality these parts [251]
are dried and kept for winter. Boxes containing a liberal
portion of the choice meat are next served and all eat freely.
Each guest puts on one side what he has not consumed as if to
carry it away, as is the custom at an ordinary feast, though his
share is really left in the shelter until the following day. Finally,
a third course is provided, the back of the fish cooked with
the bone in position. Like the last, the guests eat as much as
they desire and pack up the residue as if to take away. Then
they leave the Spring Salmon House.

All the fish are not cooked on the one occasion. The following
day the fisherman again calls back the men of his village.
The same type of meal is served, but this time the
guests carry away what they do not eat for the benefit of their
families. This portion may be eaten by the women without [562]
affronting the salmon.

This rite has not been performed in full detail in Bella Coola 226
for many years, and it was impossible to collect information on 796
some points. It is uncertain, for example, whether this ceremony 424
was carried out by every fisherman or whether there used
to be certain individuals with the prerogative of dealing with
the first catch. The latter appears to be the most logical

226 manner, and was definitely stated to be the case by one well-
796 informed old man. It is clear, however, that every spring
salmon was landed with the cry of *xak'loi·*, taken to the Spring
[424] Salmon House, and cut up by the men until the time when
women were allowed near the river. Another old man stated
[574] that the feast took place at night and that only the heads and
[251] refuse of the first catch were eaten, the remainder being dried
for the winter. Women of child-bearing age were not allowed
[562] on the river bank, and were rigorously excluded from the
Spring Salmon House until the time when the sun's shadow reached a diagonal scar on the slope of one of the mountains on the north side of North Bentinck Arm. This occurs about August. From that time onwards, there was no calling of *xak'loi·*, and women, except those who were taboo, could cut salmon freely on the bank. It was even stated that refuse of salmon could be thrown into the river after that time. No one knows the origin of this seasonal prohibition, or why it should end when the sun reaches a certain point, but it was faithfully observed in former times.

In Kimsquit similar rites were carried out, the chief variation being that the bodies of four swans were placed in the Spring Salmon House and the fish laid with these at intervals in the line. Moreover, the youth used to bite the back of each salmon as he presented it with the cedar-bark streamer. The same regulations with regard to drinking water, and crying after eating, were enforced for spring salmon as for olachen.

MISCELLANEOUS BELIEFS

372 The following miscellaneous beliefs and customs cannot be assigned to any special aspect of Bella Coola life:

If a spark from a fire jumps out and lights on a person's hand, it is said:

"The fire wants to give you [the person on whom the brand has fallen] food."

827 If a man sneezes repeatedly, it is said:

"Someone is calling your name." 827

If a man stumbles without due cause, it is said:
"Someone has food ready for you." 481

When a man partly closes his hand, if a wrinkle-like fold 787
runs straight across the palm it indicates that he is a good 322
carpenter.

If a mouse nibbles even a single smoked salmon, the whole 825
boxful is thrown away immediately in case dung has been
dropped within. It is believed that inadvertent chewing of [826]
this is responsible for wearing down the teeth.

If a man throws a stone at a pregnant snake, the young ones
may rush forth and enter the thrower's stomach. They remain [761]
invisible, and no one knows how they enter, but death always
results. Snakes are regarded with scorn and aversion, and the [756]
only men who dare to handle them are shamans.

When a milk tooth is lost, anyone who happens to be pre- 856
sent should pick it up, pass it four times around the child's 827
head, sunwise, and throw it away. No explanation of this
custom is known.[10]

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[10] This is not the only custom practised at the loss of a tooth, cf. vol. I, p. 500.

1:McIlwraith

NE6 Bellacoola NE6

116

/For the names of the informants relating the various origin myths of the Bellacoola, see footnotes in Chapter VI, category 116, pp. 292-360./

1:McIlwraith NE6 Bellacoola NE6

431, 796

/For information on the potlatch as a means of gaining prestige and a description of the ceremonies, see category 556./

1:McIlwraith NE6 Bellacoola NE6

539

/For the text of origin myths and stories illustrating the supernatural, see category 116, pp. 295-360 and pp. 619-692./ .

l:McIlwraith NE6 Bellacoola NE6

551

/For names appearing in myths see category 116, pp. 295-360 and pp. 619-692./

1:McIlwraith NE6 Bellacoola NE6

556

/For information on achieving prestige through the giving of gifts, especially at a potlatch, see category 116, pp. 163-262, and pp. 458-494./

1:McIlwraith NE6 Bellacoola NE6

622

/For information on achieving the status of "chief" through the display and distribution of wealth (especially at potlatches) see category 556./

1:McIlwraith NE6 Bellacoola NE6

624

/For information on Bellacoola heralds and their function in the potlatch ceremonies, see category 203. /

1: McIlwraith NE6 Bellacoola NE6

756

/For information on shamanism and stories illustrating shamanism, see category 116, pp. 539-594, and pp. 661-692./

2

1: McIlwraith NE6 Bellacoola NE6

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/For information on supernatural beings see category 116, pp. 30-85./

l: McIlwraith

NE6 Bellacoola NE6

787

/For information on visions, quests for visions, dreams and omens, see category 116, pp. 513-539, pp. 547-558, pp. 588-595 and pp. 599-692./

1:McIlwraith NE6 Bellacoola NE6

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765

/For information on the details of the memorial potlatch ceremonies for the dead, see category 769./